



Fatawa Related to Time, Stars and Skies

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Introduction

Following is a compilation of Q&A from islamQA.info.

This website is founded by Muhammad Saalih Al-Munajjid (born 12/30/1380 AH). He is a Saudi Arabian scholar who answers the questions based on ideologies from Salafi school of thought.

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And Allah knows best.

Are we allowed to read our star signs?

Praise be to Allaah.

Al-Bukhaari said in his *Saheeh*: Qutaadah said: “Allaah created these stars for three purposes: to adorn the heavens, to stone the devils and as signs by which to navigate. Whoever seeks anything else in them is mistaken and does not benefit from them, and he is wasting his time and effort in seeking something of which he has no knowledge.” (*Saheeh al-Bukhaari, Baab fi'l-Nujoom, 2/240*)

The study of the stars is divided into two kinds:

- 1- Study of the influence of the stars (astrology)
- 2- Study of the positions and movements of the stars (astronomy)

Study of the influence of the stars (astrology) is divided into three categories:

1 – The belief that these stars have a real influence in the sense that they create events and evil. This is major shirk (shirk akbar), because whoever claims that there is another creator alongside Allaah is a mushrik in the sense of major shirk, for he is regarding a created thing that is subjugated as a creator which subjugates.

2 – Making this a reason to claim to have knowledge of the unseen, so from the movements and changes in the stars he deduces that such and such will happen because such and such has happened to such and such a star. For example, he may say that one person’s life will be miserable because he was born under this star, and that another person’s life will be happy because he was born under that star. This person is taking knowledge of the stars as a means to claim that he has knowledge of the unseen, and claiming to have knowledge of the unseen is kufr (disbelief) which puts one beyond the pale of Islam, because Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Say: None in the heavens and the earth knows the *Ghayb* (Unseen) except Allaah”[*al-Naml 29:65*]

The grammatical structure used in the original Arabic – starting with the negation *laa* (translated here as “none”) followed by the word *illa* (“except”) – is one of the most emphatic ways of expressing exclusivity. So if a person claims to know the unseen, he is effectively disbelieving what the Qur’aan says.

3 – If he believes that the stars are the cause of good or bad things happening, this is minor shirk (shirk asghar), i.e., when something happens he attributes it to the stars (and only attributes it to the stars after it has happened). The basic principle is that whoever believes that one thing is the cause of another when Allaah has not made it so, is overstepping the mark and not acknowledging Allaah as He should be acknowledged, because the One Who makes things happen is Allaah alone. For example, if a person seeks healing from a piece of string (tied around his wrist), and says, “I believe that healing is in the hand of Allaah and this string is simply the means,” we would say to him, “You have saved yourself from major shirk but you have fallen into lesser shirk, because Allaah has not made string a clear means of healing. By doing this you have transgressed against His position of Controller and Sustainer, by making something a means to something else when Allaah has not made it so.” The same applies to one who regards the stars as the cause of rainfall when this is not the case. The evidence for that is the hadeeth narrated by al-Bukhaari (801) and Muslim (104) from Zayd ibn Khaalid al-Juhani who said: “The Messenger of Allaah SAWs (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) led us in praying Fajr at al-Hudaybiyah, following rainfall during the night. When he had finished praying, he turned to the people and said, ‘Do you know what your Lord has said?’ They said, ‘Allaah and His Messenger know best.’ He said, ‘This morning one of My slaves became a believer in Me and one became a disbeliever. As for the one who said, “We have been given rain by virtue of Allaah and His mercy,” he is a believer in Me and a disbeliever in the stars. But as for the one who said, “We have been given rain by such and such a star,” he is a disbeliever in Me and a believer in the stars.” So the one who attributes rain to the stars is saying that the stars caused the rain.

Study of the positions and movements of the stars (astronomy) is divided into two categories:

1 – If their movements are used to define things that serve a religious purpose, this is something that is necessary. If that helps in the case of religious obligations, then learning it is obligatory, such as using the stars to determine the direction of the qiblah (direction of Makkah).

2 – If their movements are used to define things that serve a worldly purpose, there is nothing wrong with that. This is of two types:

(a) Using the stars to work out directions, such as knowing that the pole lies to the north, and that the Pole Star, which is close to it, revolves around the North Pole. This is permissible. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And landmarks (signposts, during the day) and by the stars (during the night), they (mankind) guide themselves”

[al-Nabl 16:16]

(b) Using the stars to work out the seasons, through learning the phases of the moon. Some of the salaf regarded this as makrooh while others permitted it. The correct view is that it is permissible and there is nothing makrooh in it, because there is no shirk involved in it, unless one learns it in order to attribute rainfall or cold weather to it, and says that this is what is causing that. That is a kind of shirk. But simply knowing the time of year from it, whether it is spring or autumn or winter, there is nothing wrong with that.

See *al-Qawl al-Mufeed* by Shaykh Muhammad ibn ‘Uthaymeen (may Allaah have mercy on him), 2/102.

Sighting the moon not following astronomical calculations

There is a big dispute among Muslim scholars concerning the timing of the beginning of Ramadaan and 'Eid al-Fitr. Some of them act upon the sighting of the new moon, because of the hadeeth, "Fast when you sight it [the new moon] and stop fasting when you sight it..."; others rely on the calculations of astronomers, saying that these scientists have progressed so far in the science of astronomy that they are able to know when the lunar month begins. Who is right in this matter? Praise be to Allaah.

Firstly: the correct opinion which must be acted upon is that indicated by the words of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him): "Fast when you see it [the new moon] and stop fasting when you see it, and if it is cloudy then complete the month with thirty days." That is the basis for determining the beginning and end of Ramadaan by the actual sighting of the new moon. The Islamic sharee'ah with which Allaah sent our Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) is universal and everlasting, until the Day of Resurrection. (It is valid for every time and place, whether worldly sciences are advanced or otherwise, whether there are telescopes etc. or not, whether there are any people in the population who are able to do astronomical calculations or not. Sighting the moon is something that people of all places and times can do, unlike calculations which may or may not be within the reach of the people, and telescopes which may or may not be available)

Secondly: Allaah knew what progress would be made in astronomy and other sciences, but despite that He still said (interpretation of the meaning): "... *So whoever among you sights (the crescent on the first night of) the month (of Ramadaan), he must observe sawm (fast) that month...*" [al-Baqarah 2:185] and the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "Fast when you see it [the new moon] and stop fasting when you see it..." So the beginning and ending of Ramadaan are connected to the actual sighting of the moon, and not to the calculations of astronomers, even though Allaah knew that the astronomers would develop their science to the point where they would be able to calculate the positions of the stars and heavenly bodies. The Muslims are obliged to follow what Allaah has prescribed for them through His Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), basing the beginning and end of the fast on the sighting of the

moon. This is like the consensus of the scholars, whoever differs with this and relies on calculations is *shaadhdh* (“odd”) and his opinion cannot be relied on. And Allaah knows best.

The time of Fajr and mistakes in some timetables

My question is that I have read some newspaper articles which say that Egypt gives the adhaan for Fajr 30 minutes before the right time, and the author referred to some astronomical calculations which I do not understand. For example, we calculate Fajr from the latitude of 19.5 degrees and not from 17.5 degrees. All I want to know is whether Egypt is really giving the adhaan for Fajr before the proper time or not? If the answer is not available I hope that you can tell me how I can find out, whether through astronomy or whatever.

Praise be to Allaah.

Note that the time for Fajr prayer begins when the second dawn starts, which is the white line that spreads horizontally along the horizon right and left. The time lasts until the sun rises.

The first dawn is the false dawn, which is whiteness that appears vertically in the sky like pillars. This happens approximately twenty minutes before the true dawn, and it increases and decreases according to the season.

It is known that the rulings apply to the true dawn, not the false dawn.

There are many ahaadeeth which speak about the two dawns, such as the following:

The Prophet SAWS (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “There are two dawns, the dawn when food becomes haraam and prayer becomes permissible, and the dawn when prayer (i.e., Fajr prayer) is haraam and food is permitted.”

(Narrated by al-Haakim and al-Bayhaqi from the hadeeth of Ibn ‘Abbaas; classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in *Saheeh al-Jaami*, 4279).

And the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “There are two dawns. With regard to the dawn which is like the tail of a wolf, this does not make it permissible to pray and haraam to eat. With regard to the dawn which appears horizontally in the sky, this makes it permissible to pray and forbidden to eat.”

(Narrated by al-Haakim and al-Bayhaqi from the hadeeth of Jaabir; classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in *Saheeh al-Jaami*, 4278)

According to another report, “There are two dawns. One is called the tail of the wolf, which is the false dawn that appears vertically, not horizontally. The other appears horizontally and not vertically.” (Classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in *al-Silsilah al-Saheehah*, no. 2202).

And the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said, “Do not let the adhaan of Bilaal stop you from eating suhoor, or the vertical dawn, but the dawn which appears along the horizon.”

(Narrated by Abu Dawood and al-Tirmidhi, who classed it as hasan. Classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in *Saheeh al-Tirmidhi*, no. 568)

From this explanation given by the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), we know that the definition of the time of Fajr is based on observation, not on astronomical calculations or on timetables whose authors are unknown as far as their trustworthiness and knowledge are concerned, especially if it is proven that they do not give the correct times.

This mistake does not occur only in Egypt, rather it seems that most of the timetables do not give the correct time for Fajr and are based on the false dawn. This means that there is the risk that the Muslims’ prayers are invalid, especially in the case of those who pray in their houses immediately after hearing the adhaan.

A group of scholars and researchers in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Syria, Egypt and Sudan have attempted to find out the time of the true dawn, and it is clear to them that the timetables in use at present are incorrect.

Shaykh al-Albaani (may Allaah have mercy on him) said:

“I have seen that myself many times in my house, in the Hamlaan mountains to the south-east of Amman, and that enables me to confirm what some of those who are keen that the Muslims’ worship should be correct have said, that the adhaan of Fajr in some Arab countries is given 20-30 minutes before the time of the true dawn, i.e., it is also before the time of the false dawn. I have often heard the iqaamah for Fajr being given in some mosques at the time when the true dawn begins, and they give the adhaan before it is time. And they may hasten to do the fard prayer before it is time during the month of Ramadaan.”

(from *al-Silsilah al-Saheehah*, 5/25)

Once this is understood, the people from each town or city should appoint a group of trustworthy scholars to find out the time of Fajr and to announce that to the

people, and warn them against following timetables if it is proven that they are incorrect.

The brother who asked this question, and all Muslims, should not pray Fajr until they are certain or think it most likely that dawn has broken; if they can delay the adhaan until this time, they should do that. They should also explain this ruling to their wives and daughters, lest they end up doing the prayer at the wrong time.

And Allaah knows best.

Determining the qiblah by means of the sun

How can the qiblah be determined by means of the sun?

Praise be to Allaah.

Facing toward the qiblah whilst praying is a very important matter, because the validity of the prayer depends on it. Hence the scholars, both in the past and present, paid a great deal of attention to ways of determining the qiblah, one of which is the sun.

The qiblah may be determined by means of the sun, by finding out the direction from which it rises and in which it sets; from that it is possible to determine all four directions (east, west, north and south). Then the direction of the qiblah may be determined.

A person who knows that his qiblah is towards the east can face towards the east; a person who knows that his qiblah is towards the north can put the east on his right and face towards the north... and so on.

But this method is only useful for the one who knows the direction of the qiblah in his case, whether it is to the east or west and so on. All he needs to do is to determine the four directions.

See: *al-Mughni* (2/105).

Contemporary scholars and specialists in astronomy have mentioned a modern method of determining the direction of the qiblah by means of the sun, which is what they call “benefiting from the perpendicularity of the sun over Makkah al-Mukarramah.” The details of this are as follows:

The sun moves to the north and south of the equator in summer and winter. Makkah lies to the north of the equator (between it and the Tropic of Cancer).

What this means is that the sun passes over Makkah twice a year, once when it moves north of the equator and again when it returns. When the time for Zuhr prayer begins according to local time in Makkah, the sun is directly overhead in Makkah, and whoever looks at the sun at that moment will be facing the direction of the qiblah precisely, because at that moment the sun is directly above Makkah.

These two days are 28 May at 9:18 a.m. Greenwich Mean Time (GMT); and 16 July at 9:27 a.m. GMT.

But this phenomenon is only of benefit to the one who sees the sun at that moment; for people in places where it is night at this time, they cannot benefit from this.

But there are two other days when the sun is directly above the place that directly opposite the Ka'bah on the other side of the Earth (i.e., the antipodes of the Ka'bah). They are 28 November at 2109 GMT and 13 January at 2109 GMT.

But the direction of the qiblah is the direct opposite of the direction in which the sun is, so the person should turn his back on the sun, then the direction which is in front of him is the direction of the qiblah.

Thus it is possible for all the people of the earth to determine the direction of the qiblah precisely by means of the sun.

Does weather forecasting come under the heading of astrology or claiming to know the unseen?

There are some weather sites on the internet which forecast the weather that is expected in the next 5-10 days. Is it permissible for me to visit them? I am asking this question because I am afraid that they may be claiming to have knowledge of the unseen or it may be a kind of astrology, in which case it is haraam for me to visit them.

Praise be to Allaah.

Forecasting the weather does not come under the heading of astrology or claiming to have knowledge of the unseen, rather it is based on physical evidence and experience, and study of the natural laws established by Allaah. The same applies to knowing the times of solar and lunar eclipses, or when there are likely to be strong winds and rainfall.

It says in *Fataawa al-Lajnah al-Daa'imah*: 'The time of solar and lunar eclipses may be known from calculating the movements of heavenly bodies, from which it may also be known whether the eclipse will be total or partial. There is nothing strange about that, because this is not a matter of the unseen for everyone, rather it is only "unseen" for those who have no knowledge of astronomy and it is not "unseen" for those who have knowledge of this science. That does not mean that solar and lunar eclipses are not among the signs of Allaah with which He instils fear in His slaves so as to bring them back to their Lord and to obedience to Him.

It also says:

Forecasting the weather and predicting strong winds and storms or saying where clouds are expected to form or where rain is likely to fall is based on knowledge of the natural laws of Allaah. One who has experience of these laws may say what he expects to happen, without certain knowledge, on the basis of scientific theories or common experience, so he expects that and predicts it on the basis of likelihood, not certain knowledge, and he gets it right sometimes and gets it wrong sometimes. End quote from *Fataawa al-Lajnah al-Daa'imah*.

Shaykh Ibn 'Uthaymeen (may Allaah have mercy on him) said: The one who speaks of that which may be worked out by calculations is not a fortune-teller at

all, because there is no element of fortune-telling in that which may be worked out by calculations. If a person predicts a solar or lunar eclipse, this is not fortune-telling because it is worked out by calculations. If he says that the sun will set at a 20-degree angle at such and such a time, this is not knowledge of the unseen, because it is something that may be worked out by calculations, and predicting something that can be worked out by calculation, even if it is in the future, is not regarded as being knowledge of the unseen, or fortune-telling.

Is twenty-four hour weather reporting such as we have now fortune-telling?

The answer is no, because it is also based on scientific data which is describing climatic conditions, because climatic conditions have to do with precise measurements that are known to them. Thus they may predict that certain conditions are likely to produce rain or not. That is like the primitive predication that we make when we see clouds forming, and thunder and lightning and thick clouds, and we say: "It is going to rain soon."

What matters is that what points to physical phenomena is not knowledge of the unseen, even if some of the common folk think that these things are matters of the unseen and say that believing in them is like believing in fortune-telling.

End quote from *al-Qawl al-Mufeed Sharh Kitaab al-Tawheed*.

See *al-Fataawa al-Kubra* by Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah (4/424) with regard to the knowledge of astronomers about the times of solar and lunar eclipses, the beginning of spring and winter, and other matters that may be known by means of calculations and are not matters of the unseen.

And Allaah knows best.

If an eclipse is a natural phenomenon, then why should we feel scared and pray?

It is now known that eclipse is nothing but a normal process that occurs after a regular interval (that can be known) of the moon coming between the sun & the earth. Then why was it that Holy Prophet(pbuh) used to pray at that time, though it didn't cause any danger!?

Praise be to Allaah.

When the sun was eclipsed at the time of the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), he commanded someone to call out “*al-salaatu jaami’ah* (prayer is about to begin)”, and he led the people in prayer. Then he addressed them and explained to them the reason for the eclipse, and declared their jaahili beliefs to be null and void. He explained to them what they should do, such as praying and making du’aa’ and giving in charity. He (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “The sun and the moon are two of the signs of Allaah; they do not become eclipsed for the death or life of anyone. If you see that then call upon Allaah and magnify Him, and pray, and give in charity.” The Muslims did not know when an eclipse would happen, but when it did happen, they would hasten to do what Allaah had prescribed, such as praying etc.

When an eclipse happened, they would be afraid that it was a warning of impending disaster, so they would turn to Allaah and pray to Him to ward off that which they feared. When astronomy and the calculations of the movements of the sun and moon became well known in later times, and it became known that the experts could know when an eclipse was likely to happen, the scholars (‘ulamaa’) pointed out that this did not change the ruling, and that the Muslims still had to do what they were commanded to do at the time of an eclipse, even if they knew about it in advance. But it is not prescribed to concern ourselves with the matter of predicting eclipses, because that is not what Allaah and His Messenger commanded us to do. The scholars also explained that an eclipse may be a sign or a cause of something bad happening to people. When the questioner says that eclipses do not cause harm, she is speaking without knowledge and objecting to the sharee’ah of Allaah. People do not necessarily know of the events which Allaah causes to happen at the time of an eclipse, and some people may know about that whilst others do not. It could be that because of the Muslims’ prayers, Allaah wards off bad things which are known only to Him. The Muslim must submit to

the ruling of Allaah and act in accordance with His sharee'ah, and have faith in His wisdom, because He is the All-Knowing, All-Wise, may He be glorified and exalted.

(Written by Shaykh 'Abd al-Rahmaan al-Barraak).

Solar and lunar eclipses are two of the signs of Allaah with which He scares His slaves and reminds them of some of the things which will happen on the Day of Resurrection, when the sun will be wound round and will lose its light and be overthrown and the stars will fall (cf. al-Takweer 81:1), and the sight will be dazed, the moon will be eclipsed and the sun and moon will be joined together (by going into one another, or folded up, or deprived of their light) (al-Qiyaamah 75:8-9). This is why Muslims should be alarmed by eclipses. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) used to fear Allaah very much, and one day he came out in an agitated state, thinking that the Hour had begun, when the sun was eclipsed during his lifetime... This is indicative of the great extent to which he kept the Hour in mind and feared it. We, on the other hand, have become negligent and most people no longer think of eclipses as anything other than a natural phenomenon which they go out to watch with special glasses, carrying cameras. They limit themselves to the worldly scientific explanation without understanding the reminder of the Hereafter which it brings. This is one of the signs of hard-heartedness and a lack of concern about the matters of the Hereafter. It reflects a lack of fear of the onset of the Hour, and ignorance of the aims of sharee'ah and the reports that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) used to feel fear when these eclipses happened. The Sahaabah (may Allaah be pleased with them) used to stand to pray the eclipse prayer, because they believed that if indeed the Hour had come, they would not then be counted negligent of their prayer, and if this eclipse was nothing to do with the Hour, then they would not lose anything by praying, for they would have earned a great reward. We ask Allaah to make us among those who fear Him and who are afraid of the Hour. May Allaah bless our Prophet Muhammad.

The correct way to describe the sun is that it “prostrates beneath the Throne” and not that it “sets in a spring of warm water”

It is narrated by Abu Dawood in as-Sunan (3991) that Abu Dharr (may Allah be pleased with him) said: I was with the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him), riding a donkey, and the sun was setting. He said: “Do you know where this (sun) goes?” I said: Allah and His Messenger know best. He said: “It sets in a spring of warm water (innaha taghrubu fi ‘aynin hami’ah).” Is this hadeeth saheeh? If it is, then what does it mean? I have heard some non-Muslims using this to stir up doubts about Islam and cast aspersions on it.

Praise be to Allah.

Firstly:

The hadeeth of Abu Dharr (may Allah be pleased with him) which describes the place where the sun goes was narrated via Ibraaheem ibn Yazeed at-Taymi, from his father, from Abu Dharr, from the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him).

It was narrated from Ibraaheem at-Taymi by al-Hakam ibn ‘Utaybah, al-A‘mash, Fudayl ibn Ghazwaan, Haroon ibn Sa’d, and Moosa ibn al-Musayyab, as was stated by Ibn Mandah in *al-Eemaan* (2/926)

They narrated it via two isnaads:

The first isnaad:

It was narrated by al-A‘mash, Yoonus ibn ‘Ubayd, Moosa ibn al-Musayyab and Haroon ibn Sa’d. In this report it says that the sun goes and prostrates beneath the Throne or before its Lord; there is no mention of a spring of warm water. It appears in several versions, of which we will mention one here:

It was narrated that Abu Dharr (may Allah be pleased with him) said: The Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said to Abu Dharr when the sun set: “Do you know where it goes?” I said: Allah and His Messenger know best. He said: “It goes and prostrates beneath the Throne, then it asks for permission (to rise) and permission is given to it. Soon it will prostrate, but it will not be accepted from it, and it will ask for permission (to rise) but permission will not be given to

it; it will be said to it: “Go back to where you came from.’ So it will rise from its place of setting, and that is what Allah, may He be glorified, refers to in the verse (interpretation of the meaning): “*And the sun runs on its fixed course for a term (appointed). That is the Decree of the All-Mighty, the All-Knowing*” [Yaa-Seen 36:38].

It was narrated via A‘mash by al-Bukhaari in his *Saheeh* (no. 3199, 4802 and 7424); Muslim in his *Saheeh* (no. 159); Abu Dawood at-Tayaalisi in *al-Musnad* (1/368); Ahmad in *al-Musnad* (35/282, 429); at-Tirmidhi in *as-Sunan* (no. 2186, 3227 – he said: It is hasan saheeh; an-Nasaa’i in *as-Sunan al-Kubra* (10/229); at-Tabari in *Jaami‘ al-Bayaan*, 20/516); al-Bazzaar in *al-Bahr al-Zukhaar* (9/409); Abu ‘Awaanah in *al-Mustakbraj* (1/100-101); at-Tahhaawi in *Sharh Mushkil al-Athaar* (1/254); Ibn Hibbaan in his *Saheeh* (14/24); al-Qutay‘i in *Juz‘ al-Alf Dinar* (p. 183); Abu Nu‘aym in *al-Musnad al-Mustakbraj ‘ala Saheeh Muslim* (1/222); al-Baghawi in *at-Tafseer* (4/14); Abu ash-Shaykh in *al-‘Azamah* (4/1192); Ibn Mandah in *al-Eemaan* (2/924) and *at-Tawheed* (1/134, 135); Ibn Bashraan in *al-Amaali* (p. 159); al-Bayhaqi in *al-Asma wa as-Sifaat* (2/273); Ibn ‘Asaakir in *al-Mu‘jam* (2/1015); Abu Nu‘aym in *Hilyat al-Anliya*’ (4/216) and others.

It was narrated via Yoonus ibn ‘Ubayd by Imam Muslim in his *Saheeh* (no. 159); an-Nasaa’i in *as-Sunan al-Kubra* (10/96); at-Tabari in *Jaami‘ al-Bayaan* (12/249); Abu ‘Awaanah in *al-Mustakbraj* (1/100); Abu al-‘Abbaas as-Siraj in *Hadeeth as-Siraj* (3/258); Ibn Hibbaan in his *Saheeh* (14/21); Abu ash-Shaykh in *al-‘Azamah* (4/1189); Ibn Mandah in *al-Eemaan* (2/925, 926) and in *at-Tawheed* (1/136); Abu Nu‘aym in *al-Mustakbraj* (1/221).

It was narrated via Moosa ibn al-Musayyab by: Abu ash-Shaykh al-Asbahaani in *al-‘Azamah* (4/1188);

And via Haroon ibn Sa‘d by at-Tabaraani in *al-Mu‘jam al-Kabeer* (4/373); Abu ash-Shaykh al-Asbahaani in *al-‘Azamah* (4/1190).

Abu Nu‘aym (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

This is a saheeh hadeeth on which they (the hadeeth scholars) are agreed, from the hadeeth of al-A‘mash from Sufyaan ath-Thawri and others. It was narrated from at-Taymi al-Hakam ibn ‘Utaybah, Fudayl ibn ‘Umayr, Haaroon ibn Sa‘d, Moosa ibn al-Musayyab, Habeeb ibn Abi al-Ashras, and from Yoonus ibn ‘Umayd among the Basris.

End quote from *Hilyat al-Anliya*’ (4/216)

The second isnaad:

It was narrated by al-Hakam ibn ‘Utaybah only, from Ibraaheem at-Taymi; in this report it says that the sun sets in a spring of warm water.

It was narrated that Abu Dharr said: I was riding behind the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) when he was on a donkey and the sun was setting. He said: “Do you know where this (sun) sets?” I said: Allah and His Messenger know best. He said: “It sets in a spring of warm water (*innaha taghrubu fi ‘aynin haamiyah*).”

Narrated by Ahmad in *al-Musnad* (35/363); Abu Dawood in *as-Sunan* (no. 4002); Hafs ad-Doori in *Juz’ Qiraa’at an-Nabi sall Allahu ‘alayhi wa sallam* (p. 123); al-Bazzaar in *al-Bahr al-Zakhaar* (9/407); as-Siraaaj in his *Hadeeth* (3/258); al-Haakim in *al-Mustadrak* (2/267) – he said: This is a hadeeth with a saheeh isnaad, although they (al-Bukhaari and Muslim) did not narrate it. All of them narrated it via Yazeed ibn Haaron, from Sufyaan ibn Husayn, from al-Hakam.

Al-Bazzaar said: We do not know that anyone narrated it from al-Hakam ibn ‘Utaybah, from Ibraaheem, from his father, from Abu Dharr except Sufyaan ibn Husayn. Yoonus ibn ‘Ubayd narrated it from Ibraaheem at-Taymi, Sulayman al-A‘mash and Haroon ibn Sa‘d. End quote.

Secondly:

From the above it is clear that the version of the hadeeth of Abu Dharr which is most likely to be correct is the first one, in which it says: “It goes and prostrates beneath the Throne”, in which it makes no mention of it setting “in a spring of warm water (*innaha taghrubu fi ‘aynin haamiyah*).” This is based on several factors:

~1~

This wording is that on which the majority of narrators and those with the best memories agreed upon, in the report from Ibraaheem at-Taymi.

~2~

The second version (“in a spring of warm water”) was narrated only by al-Hakam ibn ‘Utaybah from Ibraaheem, and al-Hakam – although he was trustworthy – was described by an-Nasaa’i as mudallis [i.e., he used vague wording to give a wrong impression] in *Dhikr al-Mudalliseen* (no. 11). Ibn Hibbaan said: He used to engage in tadlees. End quote from *ath-Thiqaat* (4/144). None of those who narrated his

hadeeth said that he clearly stated that he heard it from the previous narrator; rather they all said that his report included the word ‘*an*’ (from – instead of ‘I heard’, etc). Ibn Hajar mentioned him in *Maraatib al-Mudalliseen* in the second rank of mudalliseen (p. 30), who are the ones whose tadlees the imams (leading scholars) tolerated and from whom they narrated reports that they regarded as sound, because of their prominence and because they rarely engaged in tadlees compared to others, such as ath-Thawri; or (it was tolerated) because they did not use engage in tadlees except when narrating from a trustworthy source, such as Ibn ‘Uyaynah. The fact that this report is contrary to the report narrated by the trustworthy narrators confirms the possibility that tadlees occurred in this hadeeth in particular.

~3~

The first version was narrated by both al-Bukhaari and Muslim, whereas the second version was not narrated by these two shaykhs. That is because they thought the first version was more likely to be correct than any other. Undoubtedly the reports in the books of al-Bukhaari and Muslim take precedence, according to the critics and scholars, than those in other books and *Musnads*.

~4~

There is a great difference between the two versions. The first one describes the sun as prostrating beneath the Throne, whether at the time of sunset or at any other time, according to different versions of the hadeeth. Prostration beneath the Throne is a matter of the unseen, and no one knows how it is except Allah, may He be glorified and exalted. He, may He be glorified and exalted, has told us that all created things prostrate to Him, as He says (interpretation of the meaning):

“See you not that to Allah prostrates whoever is in the heavens and whoever is on the earth, and the sun, and the moon, and the stars, and the mountains, and the trees, and Ad-Dawab (moving living creatures, beasts, etc.), and many of mankind? But there are many (men) on whom the punishment is justified”

[*al-Hajj 22:18*].

No one knows how this prostration is or when it happens or its real nature except Allah, may He be glorified and exalted. Similarly, the hadeeth of Abu Dharr is no different from this verse at all, and there is nothing objectionable in it.

Al-Khattaabi (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

It cannot be denied that it halts beneath the Throne, in a manner that we cannot see or comprehend; rather this is speaking about a matter of the unseen. So we should not disbelieve in it or ask how it happens, because our knowledge cannot comprehend it.

End quote from *A'laam al-Hadeeth Sharh Saheeh al-Bukhaari* (p. 1893)

With regard to the second version, “It sets in a spring of warm water”, this is problematic, because the setting of the sun occurs when its disc disappears below the horizon, and it sets on some people and rises on others because of the movement of the earth around it. So it is not possible that the sun, which is of immense size, could disappear into a spring of warm water. With regard to the words of Allah, may He be exalted, in the story of Dhu'l-Qarnayn (interpretation of the meaning): “*Until, when he reached the setting place of the sun, he found it setting in a spring of black muddy (or hot) water*” [al-Kahf 18:86], the commentators said that what is meant is to depict the scene that appeared before him, for he saw it on the horizon of the sea, as if it were sinking into it at the time of setting. The Holy Qur'an does not tell us that this was something that happened in a real sense; hence Allah, may He be glorified, said “he found it setting” and He did not say “it was setting in a spring of black muddy (or hot) water.”

Al-Haafiz Ibn Katheer (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

That is, the way he saw the sun was as if it was setting in the ocean, which is something that happens to everyone who stands on the shore: he sees the sun as if it is setting into the sea, when in fact it does not leave the celestial path on which it is firmly established.

End quote from *Tafseer al-Qur'an al-Kareem* (5/191)

To sum up: whoever casts aspersions on the Sunnah because of this wording is ignorant of the precision of the hadeeth scholars in examining different versions of the hadeeth and distinguishing between the reports which are proven and those which are not proven. The fact that some scholars regarded this report as saheeh is problematic; rather what they intended was to class as saheeh the basis of the hadeeth, not to suggest that this version is more correct than that which is proven in *as-Saheehayn*: “It goes and prostrates beneath the Throne.”

In order to refute this specious argument, it is sufficient to note that the scholars of Islam were unanimously agreed that the earth is round and that all the celestial bodies are also round. It is on that basis that night and day alternate, because of the

movements and rotation of these heavenly bodies. This is clear from many texts of the Qur'an and Sunnah.

Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

The heavenly bodies are round, according to the Muslim scholars among the Sahaabah and those who followed them in guidance; that was also proven from them with isnaads mentioned in the appropriate places. In fact, more than one of the Muslim scholars narrated that there was consensus among the Muslims on that point.

End quote from *Minhaaj as-Sunnah an-Nabawiyyah* (5/442)

The Muslims were ahead of others in knowledge of astronomy; if the apparent meaning of this hadeeth contradicts that, then there would not have been consensus on the contrary; but the correct view is that the hadeeth does not contradict the scientific, astronomical facts.

And Allah knows best.

Difficulty in sighting the moon in industrialized areas

In my area it is believe that one can not see the first moon due to the fact that there are many industry .what do you say to this. and what is the size of the first moon. Praise be to Allaah.

It is not difficult to sight the new moon when it appears. Although it may be difficult to sight it in some places because there is too much smoke, it will not be difficult to sight it in other areas where the sky is clearer.

No matter how high smoke and buildings may be, they can never cover the moon like the clouds. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) has told us that if it is cloudy and we cannot see the new moon, then we must complete the month of Sha'baan and regard it as having thirty days.

So either the new moon can be seen through the smoke and buildings, in which case we should fast when it is seen;

Or it can be seen in another place where the sky is clearer, so we should fast when it is seen;

Or it is too cloudy and we cannot see it, so we should regard Sha'baan as having thirty days.

With regard to the size of the new moon when it appears, it is very small and cannot be seen except by one who has good eyesight.

And Allaah knows best.

Facing the sun or moon when relieving oneself

What is the reasoning behind the Hanbali madhab stating that it is makruh in the to face the sun or moon when answering the call of nature ? This is the mutamad position as it is agreed upon in both al-Iqna and al-Muntaha. Ibn al-Qayyim states in Miftah Dar al-Sa'ada (2.205-206), "Not a single word about this has been reported from the Prophet , not with an authentic or weak isnad, or a mursal or continuous isnad. This issue has no foundation (asl) in the shar'." But still there are still some other strands of Hanabila left in the world who hold this opinion.

Praise be to Allaah.

The view of the Hanbali madhhab is that it is makrooh to face the sun or moon when relieving oneself; the reason they gave for this ruling is that there is some of the light of Allah in both of them.

Shaykh Mansoor al-Bahooti (may Allah have mercy on him) said: And it is makrooh (to face the sun or moon) without a barrier when relieving oneself, because there is some of the light of Allah in both of them, and it was narrated that there are angels with them and that the names of Allah, may He be exalted, are written on them.

End quote from *Kashshaaf al-Qinaa'*, 1/62

The Hanbali view with regard to this matter is the view of the majority.

Radd al-Muhtaar 'ala al-Durr al-Mukhtaar, 1/343; *Haashiyat al-Bujayrami 'ala al-Khateeb*, 1/196; *al-Taaj wa'l-Ikleel li Mukhtasar Khaleel*, 1/408; *al-Mawsoo'ah al-Fiqhiyyah*, 34/9

The second opinion is that it is not makrooh to face the sun or moon when relieving oneself, and this is the correct opinion.

Al-Nawawi (may Allah have mercy on him) said: 'This is the favoured view, because judging something to be mustahabb requires evidence, and there is no evidence with regard to this matter.

End quote from *al-Majmoo'*, 2/111

Shaykh Muhammad ibn 'Uthaymeen (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

The correct view is that it is not makrooh, because of the absence of any sound evidence and because the evidence which indicates that it is permissible is proven.

End quote from *al-Sharh al-Mumti'* by Ibn 'Uthaymeen, 1/123

And Allah knows best.

There is nothing wrong with sighting the moon by means of modern instruments

Is it essential that the moon be sighted with the naked eye, or can we use telescopes and modern instruments?.

Praise be to Allaah.

The shar'i evidence indicates that people should not go to great lengths to sight the moon with these instruments; rather it is sufficient to sight it with their eyes. But if a person seeks the moon with them and is certain that he has seen it by means of them after the sun has set, and he is a Muslim of good character, then I do not know of any reason why his sighting of the moon should not be followed, because it is still a visual sighting and is not calculation. End quote.

Shaykh 'Abd al-'Azeez ibn Baaz (may Allaah have mercy on him)

The Muslims should cooperate in sighting the moon and informing the authorities

What should a person do if he saw the new moon of Ramadaan or Dhu'l-Hijjah, and he did not tell the relevant authorities about that?.

Praise be to Allaah.

What the one who sees the new moon on the night of the thirtieth of Sha'baan or the thirtieth of Ramadaan or the thirtieth of Shawwaal or the thirtieth of Dhu'l-Qa'dah should do is to inform the court in his city, unless he knows that the sighting of the new moon has been confirmed by someone else, in accordance with the words of Allaah (interpretation of the meaning):

“Help you one another in Al-Birr and At-Taqwa (virtue, righteousness and piety)”

[al-Maa'idah 5:2]

“So keep your duty to Allaah and fear Him as much as you can; listen and obey”

[al-Taghaabun 64:16]

And the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “The Muslim must hear and obey.” Narrated by Muslim (1839).

And he said: “I urge you to fear Allaah and to hear and obey, even if a slave is appointed over you.”

It is well known that the ruler via the highest judiciary council of Muslims requires the one who sights the new moon to inform the authorities. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “Fast when you see it (i.e. the new moon) and stop fasting when you see it, ... but if it is too cloudy then complete the number.” There is no way of following these ahaadeeth except by the help of Allaah, then by cooperation among the Muslims in sighting the new moon, and informing the authorities when it is sighted. The one who sights it has to inform the official authorities of that. Thus obedience to the shar'i commands and cooperation in righteousness and piety will be achieved. And Allaah is the Source of strength. End quote.

Is the person who sights the new moon of Ramadaan on his own obliged to fast?

A man saw the new moon of Ramadaan on his own – is he obliged to fast? If that is the case, is there any evidence?.

Praise be to Allaah.

If a man saw the new moon of Ramadaan on his own, or he saw the new moon of Shawwaal on his own, and he told the qaadi or the people of the city but they did not accept his testimony, should he fast on his own or should he only fast with the people? There are three scholarly points of view:

1 – He should act upon his own sighting in both cases, so he should fast from the beginning of the month and break the fast at the end on his own. This is the view of Imam al-Shaafa'i (may Allaah have mercy on him).

But he should do that secretly so that he does not show openly that he is doing something different than the people and so that this will not lead to them thinking badly of him or regarding him as a fast-breaker when they are fasting.

2 – He should act upon his own sighting at the beginning of the month and fast on his own, but at the end of the month he should not act upon his own sighting, rather he should break the fast when the people do.

This is the view of the majority of scholars, including Abu Haneefah, Maalik and Ahmad (may Allaah have mercy on them).

This view was also favoured by Shaykh Ibn 'Uthaymeen (may Allaah have mercy on him) who said: This is in order to be on the safe side, so that we may be on the safe side with regard to starting and ending the fast. With regard to fasting, we say to him: fast, and with regard to breaking the fast, we say to him: Do not break the fast, rather you should fast. End quote from *al-Sharh al-Mumti'*, 6/330.

3 – He should not act upon his own sighting in either case; rather he should start fasting and stop fasting with the people.

This was the view of Imam Ahmad in one report, and it was the view favoured by Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah, He quoted a great deal of evidence to support it, and he said: The third view is that he should start and end the fast with the people. This is the most correct (?) view, because the Prophet (peace and blessings of

Allaah be upon him) said: “Your fast is the day when you fast, and your breaking the fast is the day when you break the fast, and your sacrifice is the day when you offer the sacrifice.” Narrated by al-Tirmidhi, who said it is hasan ghareeb. Also narrated by Abu Dawood, and by Ibn Maajah, who mentioned breaking the fast and the sacrifice only. Also narrated by al-Tirmidhi from the hadeeth of ‘Abd-Allaah ibn Ja’far from ‘Uthmaan ibn Muhammad from al-Maqbari from Abu Hurayrah, that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “The fast is the day when you fast, the breaking of the fast is the day when you break the fast, and the sacrifice is the day when you offer the sacrifice.” Al-Tirmidhi said: This is a hasan ghareeb hadeeth. And some scholars interpreted this hadeeth as meaning that one should start and end the fast with the community and the majority of the people. End quote from *Majmoo’ al-Fataawa*, 25/114.

He also quoted as evidence the fact that even if he sighted the new moon of Dhu’l-Hijjah on his own, none of the scholars suggested that he should observe the standing at ‘Arafah on his own.

He said that the basic principle concerning this matter is that the ruling is connected to the new moon of the month. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“They ask you (O Muhammad) about the new moons [ahillah]. Say: These are signs to mark fixed periods of time for mankind and for the pilgrimage”

[al-Baqarah 2:189]

Hilal (pl. ahillah) in Arabic refers to when something is announced and everyone knows about it. If the hilal shows in the sky but people did not recognize it and announce its sighting, then it is not a hilal.

Similarly the word shahr (month) is taken from the word shuhrah (fame); if it is not well known among the people then the month has not begun. Many people make a mistake with regard to this matter and think that when the moon appears in the sky, that night is the first of the month, whether it appears to the people and they announce it or not. But that is not the case, rather it has to appear to the people and they have to announce the beginning of the month when they see it. Hence the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “Your fast is the day when you fast, and your breaking the fast is the day when you break the fast, and your sacrifice is the day when you offer the sacrifice” i.e., this day on which you announce the beginning or end of the fast or the sacrifice. If you do not

recognize it, then no ruling can be based on that. End quote from *Majmoo' al-Fataawa*, 25/202.

This view was expressed in a fatwa issued by Shaykh ‘Abd al-‘Azeez ibn Baaz (may Allaah have mercy on him).

Majmoo' Fataawa al-Shaykh, 15/72.

The hadeeth, “The fast is the day when you fast...” was classed as saheeh by al-Albaani (may Allaah have mercy on him) in *Saheeh Sunan al-Tirmidhi*, no. 561.

See the views of the fuqaha’ in *al-Mughni*, 3/47, 49; *al-Majmoo’*, 6/290; *al-Mawsoo’ah al-Fiqhiyyah*, 28/18.

And Allaah knows best.

Is it necessary for every single Muslim to see the new moon of Ramadaan?

What is the ruling on a person who does not fast according to the first sighting of the new moon of Ramadaan, but waits until he sees it for himself? Is their interpretation of hadeeth, “Fast when you see it [the new moon] and stop fasting when you see it” correct??

Praise be to Allaah.

What is obligatory is to fast when the sighting of the moon is confirmed, even if it is seen by only one trustworthy Muslim, as the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) issued orders to fast when a Bedouin testified that he had seen the new moon. Interpreting the hadeeth “Fast when you see it and stop fasting when you see it” as meaning that no individual should fast until he sees the new moon for himself is incorrect, because the hadeeth is telling everyone to fast when the sighting is confirmed, even if only one trustworthy Muslim sees the new moon. (*Fataawa al-Lajnah al-Daa’imah*, 10/94).

Further evidence that the sighting of the new moon by one trustworthy, reliable Muslim is sufficient for fasting to be obligatory on all the people is the hadeeth of Ibn ‘Umar (may Allaah be pleased with him), who said: “The people went out to sight the new moon and I told the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) that I had seen it, so he fasted and told the people to fast.” (Reported by Abu Dawood in his *Sunan*, *Kitaab al-Sawm*, *Baab fi Shahaadat al-Waahid ‘ala ru’yat hilaali Ramadaan*).

Some of those who follow bid’ah delay fasting until after all the other Muslims have started to fast, because of their misguided belief that fasting is not obligatory on a person until he sees the new moon for himself. The ahaadeeth refute this, and we would ask them moreover: what are those who are blind or who have poor eyesight supposed to do? It is as Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning): “...*Verily, it is not the eyes that grow blind, but it is the hearts which are in the breasts that grow blind.*” [al-Hajj 22:46].

And Allaah is the One Who guides to the Straight Path.

It is permissible to use telescopes etc., but not calculations, to sight the new moon

It is not possible to see the new moon with the naked eye before it is 30 hours old, and in addition to that, it is sometimes not possible to see it at all because of the weather conditions. On this basis, is it permissible to resort to using astronomical information to calculate the likely time for sighting the new moon and the start of Ramadaan, or do we have to actually sight the new moon before we start fasting the blessed month of Ramadaan?

Praise be to Allaah.

It is permissible to use telescopes etc. to sight the moon, but it is not permissible to rely on astronomical data to confirm the beginning or end of the blessed month of Ramadaan, because Allaah has not prescribed that for us in His Book or in the Sunnah of His Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him). What He has prescribed for us is to confirm the beginning and end of Ramadaan by sighting the new moon of Ramadaan to start fasting, and the new moon of Shawwaal to end the fast and gather to offer the Eid prayers. Allaah has made the new moons to mark fixed periods of time for mankind and for the Hajj, so it is not permissible for Muslims to use any other method to determine the times for acts of worship such as fasting, celebrating Eid, performing Hajj, fasting for two months as expiation (kafaarah) for killing someone by mistake or divorcing one's wife by zihaar, and so on. Allaah says (interpretation of the meanings):

"... So whoever among you sights (the crescent on the first night of) the month (of Ramadaan), he must observe sawm (fast) that month..." [al-Baqarah 2:185]

"They ask you (O Muhammad) about the new moons. Say: these are signs to mark fixed periods of time for mankind and for the pilgrimage..." [al-Baqarah 2:189]

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "Fast when you see it [the new moon] and stop fasting when you see it, and if it is cloudy then complete the month with thirty days." On this basis, the one who does not see the new moon from the time it rises on a clear or cloudy night must complete the month (of Sha'baan) with thirty days. (*Fataawa al-Lajnah al-Daa'imah*, 10/100). This is the case if the sighting of the new moon is not confirmed in another country; if the moon is sighted according to the guidelines of Sharee'ah, then fasting is obligatory, according to the majority of scholars. And Allaah knows best.

Can Muslims living in Western countries form committees to sight the moon?

Is it permissible for Muslims who are living in a non-Islamic country to form a committee to confirm the sighting of the new moon for Ramadaan, Shawwaal, Dhoo'l-Hijjah or not?

Praise be to Allaah.

The Muslims living in non-Islamic countries are permitted to form committees to take on the responsibility of confirming the new moon for Ramadaan, Shawwaal and Dhoo'l-Hijjah.

They did not see the new moon of Dhu'l-Hijjah – what should they do?

I am a Sunni Muslim living in Japan, writing to ask you about the sighting of the new moon of Dhu'l-Hijjah, because the Muslims are disputing about the day of Eid.

My question here is should we celebrate Eid with Saudi Arabia or should we follow the closest (Muslim) country to us?.

Praise be to Allaah.

It is sufficient for you to follow the sighting of the moon that has been proven in the land of the Two Holy Sanctuaries.

And Allaah knows best.

Should he fast with his own country or with any country that sights the new moon?

What should I do if the moon is sighted in some Muslim countries but the country where I am working completes the month of Sha'baan and Ramadaan as thirty days? What is the cause of the people's differences in Ramadaan?.

Praise be to Allaah.

You have to stay with the people of your country. When they fast, then fast with them, and when they break the fast then break the fast with them, because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "The fast is the day when you fast, and the breaking of the fast (al-iftaar) is the day when you break the fast, and the sacrifice (al-adha) is the day when you offer the sacrifice." And because dissent is evil. So you have to be with the people of your country. So when the Muslims in your country break the fast, then break the fast with them, and when they fast then fast with them.

As for the cause of differences, the reason is that some people see the new moon and some do not see it, then those who have seen the new moon may be trusted by others who follow their sighting, or they may not be trusted, and hence differences arise. One country may sight it and rule accordingly, and fast and break the fast on that basis, whereas another country may not be convinced of this sighting and may not trust the other country, for many reasons, political and otherwise.

What the Muslims must do is fast all together when they see the new moon, and break the fast when they see it, because of the general meaning of the words of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him): "When you see the new moon then fast, and when you see the new moon then break the fast, and if it is too cloudy then complete the number of days as thirty." If they are all certain of the validity of the moon sighting, and that it is real and proven, then they must fast and break the fast accordingly, but if the people differ and do not trust one another, then you have to fast with the Muslims in your country, and break the fast with them, in accordance with the words of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him): "The fast is the day when you fast, and the breaking of the fast (al-iftaar) is the day when you break the fast, and the sacrifice (al-adha) is the day when you offer the sacrifice."

It was proven from Ibn ‘Abbaas (may Allaah be pleased with him) that when Kurayb told him that the people of Syria had started fasting on a Friday, Ibn ‘Abbaas said: We saw it on Saturday, and we will carry on fasting until we see the new moon or we complete thirty days. He did not follow the sighting of the people of Syria because Syria is far away from Madeenah and there may be a difference in moonsighting between the two. He (may Allaah be pleased with him) thought that this was a matter that was subject to ijtihaad. You have a good example to follow in Ibn ‘Abbaas and the scholars who followed him and said that you should fast with the people of your country and break the fast with them. And Allaah is the Source of strength. End quote.

Shaykh ‘Abd al-‘Azeez ibn Baaz (may Allaah have mercy on him).

We should rely on sighting of the moon, not on calculations

As-salamo Alikum Wa Rahamtu Allah Wa Barakatoh

I pray that Allah grant your Tech. by his mercy. Still he in sha;a Allah got the reward of this valuable home page. Please, visit the following web-site, XXXX it is concerning Hilal sighting and calculation, they claimed that in XXXX they never sight the moon and every thing run according to astronomy calculations.

My question, Is this information is right or worng, and what is the real authentic way to decied the begining of Hajrii moneth?

Praise be to Allaah.

Islam is easy and its rules apply to everyone, mankind and jinn alike, regardless of whether they are scholars or illiterate, settled or nomadic. So Allaah made it easy for them to know the times for the acts of worship, and made their beginning and end signs which everyone can know. He made the setting of the sun the sign for the beginning of Maghrib and the end of 'Asr, and He made the disappearance of the red glow in the sky the sign of the beginning of the time of 'Isha'. He made the sighting of the moon after its disappearance at the end of the month the sign of the beginning of the new lunar month and the end of the previous month. He did not give us the task of knowing the beginning of the lunar month from something which is known to only a small number of people, namely astronomy and its calculations. Thus the texts of the Qur'aan and Sunnah make the actual sighting of the new moon the signal for the Muslims to start fasting Ramadaan; they stop fasting when they see the new moon of Shawwaal; the dates of Eid al-Adhaa and Yawm 'Arafaat are similarly determined. Allaah says (interpretation of the meanings):

"... So whoever among you sights (the crescent on the first night of) the month (of Ramadaan), he must observe sawm (fast) that month..." [al-Baqarah 2:185]

"They ask you (O Muhammad) about the new moons. Say: these are signs to mark fixed periods of time for mankind and for the pilgrimage..." [al-Baqarah 2:189]

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “Fast when you see it [the new moon] and stop fasting when you see it, and if it is cloudy then complete the month with thirty days.”

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) made the beginning of the fast conditional upon the confirmed sighting of the new moon of Ramadaan, and the ending of the fast conditional upon the confirmed sighting of the new moon of Shawwaal; he did not connect this to calculations of the movements of stars or other heavenly bodies. This is how it was done at the time of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), during the rule of the Khulafa' al-Raashidoon, at the time of the four imaams, and during the three centuries which the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said were the best. Referring to calculations of the lunar months to start and end periods of worship, instead of actually sighting the new moon, is a bid'ah (reprehensible innovation) that has no good in it and has no basis in sharee'ah. The best of all is to follow the salaf in religious matters, and the worst of all is to follow newly-invented innovations in religion. May Allaah protect us and you and all the Muslims from tribulation, both obvious and hidden.

The Meaning of the Verse "And the Moon, We have measured for it mansions ..."

I am very interested in Islam. I have since 1994 started to read the Qur'an and the Prophets Hadiths (pbuh) since early this year and I have found great spiritual fulfillment in Islam. I will (Insha Allah) soon be receiving Namaaz lessons as I plan on embracing Islam. I am not sure of the meaning of a particular verse in the Qur'an from Surah Ya-Sin and I hope that you can be of help. And the moon, We have measured for it mansions (to traverse) till it returns like the old dried curved date stalk (36:39)

I will appreciate your help. May Allah guide, protect and bless you for all the help you have given to so many people across the world by answering our questions and ending our dilemmas.

Praise be to Allaah.

First of all, let me congratulate you for reaching a conviction that Islam is true and that it is the only religion which meets the needs of man's soul and fills it with tranquillity and joy. From the way in which you phrased your question, it is clear that what you have read about Islam has had an effect on you, so much so that if you had not stated that you are Hindu, we would have thought you were Muslim.

The most important thing I want to say to you is to advise you to hasten to enter Islam, and do it sooner rather than later. Once a person is convinced of the truth, what reason is there to delay embracing Islam?

There is another point which also needs to be made clear. Some of those who want to enter Islam delay doing so until they have learnt some practical aspects of this faith, such as how to pray and so on, because they think that they are not fit to enter the religion until they have learnt some of its teachings. This is not correct; once the truth is clear to a person, it is his duty to follow it and enter Islam straight away. Then he can learn about the Qur'an and Sunnah and broaden his

understanding of Islam. The Muslim is required to take learning and practice step by step, as much as he is able to, because no one knows when he or she will die. If a person meets Allaah (dies) with a religion other than Islaam, he will be one of the doomed. Furthermore, a person will not be rewarded and no hasanaat will be recorded for him until after he has entered Islaam, so he will lose a lot of benefits if he delays his Islaam; time wasted can never be recovered.

Now let us go back to your question, which has to do with the thirty-ninth aayah of Soorah Yaa-Seen.

In this aayah, Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning): "And the moon, We have measured for it mansions (to traverse)" [Yaa-Seen 36:39], i.e., We have made it progress through stages by which the passing of months can be measured, just as night and day are known from the sun.

Allaah says (interpretation of the meanings):

"They ask you about the new moons. Say: These are signs to mark fixed periods of time for mankind and for the pilgrimage . . ." [al-Baqarah 2:189]
"It is He Who made the sun a shining thing and the moon as a light , and measured out its (their) stages, that you might know the number of their years and the reckoning. . ." [Yoonus 10:5]

Allaah has given the sun its own light and has given the moon a (reflection) of light, and has made their courses different, so that the sun rises every day and sets at the end of the day with one unchanging kind of light, but the positions of its rising and setting vary from summer to winter, because of which the days may be long and the nights short, then the days become short and the nights long. The sun is dominant in the day, so it is the heavenly body of the daytime.

As for the moon, Allaah has measured for it mansions or stages, so that on the first night of the month it rises as a faint crescent, giving little light, then its light increases in stages and its position gets higher each night. Every time its position is higher, it has more light, even though it is a reflection of the sun's light, until its light becomes complete, on the fourteenth of the month, when it is a full moon.

Then it starts to decrease until, at the end of the month, it "returns like the old dried curved date stalk"

Ibn 'Abbaas, may Allaah be pleased with him, said: "This is the stalk of a bunch of dates." Mujaahid said: "It is a dried stalk." Ibn 'Abbaas meant: the stalk of a bunch of dates when it becomes old, dry and bent. (Reference: Tafsir Ibn Katheer).

This likening of the moon at the end of the month to an old dried curved date stalk is a beautiful example of eloquence, by choosing a simile from the environment of the first listeners.

And Allaah knows best.

Is there a certain length of time that the new moon has to be in the sky?

What is the method of confirming the beginning of every lunar month? Is there a certain length of time that the new moon has to be in the sky?

Praise be to Allaah.

The saheeh ahaadeeth reported from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) indicate that when the new moon is seen by a trustworthy person after the sun has set on the thirtieth night of Sha'baan or the thirtieth night of Ramadaan, this sighting is considered to be valid, and the first of the month is established without any need to consider the length of time that the moon stays in the sky after sunset, whether twenty minutes or more or less. There is nothing in the saheeh ahaadeeth to indicate how long it should take for the moon to set after the sun has set.

What counts with regard to the beginning and end of the month is sighting of the moon

Some people claimed to have sighted the new moon of Ramadan, whilst astronomers and those who follow calculations claim that it is not possible to have sighted it on that night. There is no confusion in my mind because of this, as calculations may be wrong. But what does confuse me is that the astronomers and those who deal with calculations claim that they tried to sight the moon that night with the telescopes and other equipment that they have but they did not see it. How can it be seen with the naked eye and not with modern equipment? If it were the other way around, and they saw it with their equipment but it was not seen with the naked eye, there would be some justification for the difference of opinion as to whether we should fast or not, and whether the people should break the fast or not. But the problem is: How can they see it with the naked eye and it is not seen with their equipment? In fact I would like you to explain clearly so as to dispel my anxiety and confusion, because I do not think I am alone in this matter. Praise be to Allaah.

What counts with regard to confirming the beginning of the month of Ramadan is sighting of the new moon or the completion of 30 days of Sha'baan if the moon is not sighted. This is what is indicated by the saheeh Sunnah, and the scholars are unanimously agreed on it. Al-Bukhaari (1909) and Muslim (1081) narrated that Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) said: The Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: "Fast when you see it and break the fast when you see it, and if it is cloudy then reckon the month as thirty."

Astronomical calculations do not count. The basic principle with regard to sighting is that it should be done with the naked eye, but if the crescent moon is sighted with modern equipment, then this sighting may be acted upon, as stated in the answer to question number 106489. With regard to how the new moon is sighted with the naked eye when it is not seen with telescopes and equipment, this may be due to differences in the place and time of sighting.

Whatever the case, the ruling depends on sighting of the new moon. So long as it has been seen by one or two trustworthy Muslims, then it is obligatory to act upon this sighting.

Shaykh Saalih ibn Muhammad al-Lahaydaan, the head of the Higher Judiciary Council (may Allah preserve him) said: There is a brother called ‘Abd-Allaah al-Khudayri who is famous for sighting the moon and he is one of those who are known to be involved in sighting the moon at different stages, even at times other than the new moon. Some astronomers went to him and met with him in the region of Hawtah Sadeer. And he told me that they estimated that the moon would appear on that night in a certain place according to the calculations they did on their computers, but he told them that it would not appear from the place that they said, because he had seen it before them the night before, and he knew the stations of the moon and from where it would rise every night. Then when the moon appeared, it rose from the place he mentioned and not the place they mentioned. But he excused them because their conclusion was not based on direct moon sighting; rather it was based on calculations with the computers they had. End quote from an interview with him in al-Riyadh newspaper.

http://www.alriyadh.com/2007/10/12/article286271_shtml

And Allah knows best.

The hadeeth about the eclipse of the sun and moon when the Mahdi emerges is not saheeh

I used to belong to the Ahmadi sect but praise be to Allaah, Allaah has guided me to the Sunnah, myself, my mother and two of my brothers. I ask Allaah to guide my father and all my brothers and sisters.

I have read a hadeeth which says that one of the signs of the Mahdi will be that the sun and moon will be eclipsed in the month of Ramadaan, when he first appears. Is this hadeeth saheeh (sound) or da'eef (weak)?.

Praise be to Allaah.

We praise Allaah for having guided you and saved you from the danger of this deviant sect, and we ask Him to bless your father and all your family with right guidance.

With regard to the report that you refer to, this is not a hadeeth from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), rather it was narrated by al-Daaraqutni in his *Sunan* (2/65) from the words of Muhammad ibn al-Haneefiyyah (the son of 'Ali ibn Abi Taalib). Al-Daaraqutni said: Abu Sa'eed al-Astakhri told us, Muhammad ibn 'Abd-Allaah ibn Nawfal told us, 'Ubayd ibn Ya'eesh told us, Yoonus ibn Bakeer told us, from 'Amr ibn Shamr, from Jaabir, from Muhammad ibn 'Ali who said:

“Our Mahdi will have two signs, which have never appeared since the heavens and earth were created. The moon will be eclipsed on the first night of Ramadaan and the sun will be eclipsed halfway through, and this has never happened since Allaah created the heavens and the earth.”

This report is mawdoo' (fabricated) and is falsely attributed to Muhammad ibn 'Ali (ibn al-Haneefiyyah), may Allaah have mercy on him.

Dr. 'Abd al-'Aleem 'Abd al-'Azeem al-Bastawi said in his book *al-Mawsoo'ah fi Abaadeeth al-Mahdi al-Da'eefah wa'l-Mawdoo'ah*, p. 169:

“Its isnaad includes Yoonus ibn Bakeer ibn Waasil al-Shaybaani, Abu Bakr al-Jammaal al-Kufi (d. 199 AH), who makes mistakes; and ‘Amr ibn Shamr al-Ja’fi al-Kufi, the Shi’i Abu ‘Abd-Allaah, who is a fabricator of reports.

Al-Sulaymaani said: ‘Amr used to fabricate ahaadeeth to support the Raafidis (Shi’is).

Al-Jawzjaani said: He is a liar and deviant.

Al-Haakim said: There were many fabricated reports from Jaabir al-Ja’fi, and no one narrated these false and fabricated reports from Jaabir except him.

Ibn Hibbaan said: He is a Raafidi (Shi’i) who used to defame the Sahaabah and narrate fabricated reports from trustworthy narrators.

Abu Haatim said: His hadeeth is munkar and da’eef, and should be ignored; they [the scholars] ignored him.

He was described in such negative terms by more than one of the scholars, including al-Bukhaari, al-Nasaa’i, Ibn Sa’d, al-Daaraqutni and others.

Jaabir is al-Ja’fi, who is matrook al-hadeeth. Shu’bah, Wakee’ and al-Thawri described him as trustworthy, but Ibn Ma’een, Abu Haneefah, Layth ibn Abi Sulaym, al-Jawzjaani, Ibn ‘Uyaynah, Ibn Kharraash, Sa’eed ibn Jubayr and others described him as a liar, and many described him as da’eef (weak).

Al-Dhahabi said: Only Shu’bah described him as trustworthy so he was at odds with other scholars, and the scholars of hadeeth ignored his narrations.

Ibn Hajar said: he is da’eef (weak) and a Raafidi (Shi’i).

In conclusion: this report is mawdoo’ (fabricated) and the problem in its isnaad is ‘Amr al-Ja’fi.

Al-‘Azeemabaadi said: ‘Amr ibn Shamr from Jaabir: both of them are da’eef (weak) and cannot be quoted as evidence.”

And Allaah knows best.

A questioner is commenting on the previous answer about fasting and the hadeeth of Ibn ‘Abbaas about moon sighting with one witness

In your answer to question number 26824, you stated that it is permissible to accept the opinion of a trustworthy person with regard to moon sighting, but this contradicts the hadeeth that says that a Bedouin came to the Messenger (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) and told him that he had seen the moon. When the Messenger asked him, “Do you believe that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah?” and he answered in the affirmative, he asked him: “Do you bear witness that you have seen the moon?” Hence this hadeeth is evidence that it is permissible to accept the moon sighting from any Muslim.

Praise be to Allaah.

The hadeeth that the questioner is referring to is:

It was narrated that Ibn ‘Abbaas (may Allah be pleased with him) said: A Bedouin came to the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) and said, I have seen the new moon tonight. He said, “Do you bear witness that there is no god except Allaah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allaah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him)?” He said, Yes. He said, “Get up, O Bilaal, and announce to the people that they should fast tomorrow.”

Narrated by al-Tirmidhi (691), Abu Dawood (2340), al-Nasaa’i (2112) and Ibn Maajah (1652). The hadeeth is da’eef (weak) and not saheeh. It was classed as weak by al-Nasaa’i, al-Albaani and others.

As the hadeeth is weak, there is no contradiction between it and what we have mentioned about it being essential that the one who sights the moon should be of good character.

Even if we assume that the hadeeth is saheeh, it may be interpreted in several ways, such as:

- 1.

That the issue with regard to accepting the testimony of the one who has seen the new moon and the issue of determining whether he is trustworthy and of good character is up to the judge to decide. If he is confident, because of his experience with people, that this person who has seen the moon is trustworthy in his testimony, he may accept this testimony from him, even if no one knows him and is able to confirm that he is of good character and trustworthy.

Shaykh al-Albaani (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

So we see from the hadeeth that he instructed Bilaal to announce to the people that they would fast the next day. So the Messenger (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) was content with the testimony of this man, whom he did not know, on the basis that he bore witness that there is no God but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, i.e. he knew that he was a Muslim, but he did not check on him any further and he did not try to find out how intelligent and smart he was, as was the case in the first hadeeth in which the witness was ‘Abd-Allah ibn ‘Umar ibn al-Khattaab. Yet despite that he accepted his testimony. This hadeeth makes things easier for people, and what this means is that the judge should be content with the witness as he appears to be, without needing to find people who know this man and can testify that he is of good character, as was the habit of judges since time immemorial. Rather it is sufficient to know that he is a Muslim. This man was a Bedouin of whom the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) had no prior knowledge and he was content that he uttered the Shahaadatayn before him. So he was a Muslim with the same rights and duties as any other, and based on his testimony and the fact that he was a Muslim he said: O Bilaal, announced to the people that they should fast tomorrow.

Al-Ta’laaq ‘ala Kitaab Buloogh al-Maraam, (audio tape), hadeeth 5, *Kitaab al-Siyaam*.

2.

That this hadeeth is evidence for the principle that a Muslim is to be regarded as being of good character unless proven otherwise. Al-San’aani (may Allah have mercy on him) said concerning what we learn from the hadeeth of Ibn ‘Abbaas:

It indicates that the basic principle with regard to the Muslims is that they are of good character, because the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) did not ask the Bedouin for anything except the Shahaadah.

Subul al-Salaam by al-San’aani, 2/153

3.

That this ruling only applies to the Sahaabah, which is the case because they are all to be regarded as being of good character. There is no doubt that that Bedouin is to be included as one of the Sahaabah (may Allah be pleased with them), and thus he is to be regarded as a man of good character, one of those who do not need to be examined to prove that they are of good character.

Shaykh Muhammad ibn Saalih al-'Uthaymeen (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

All of the Sahaabah are trustworthy and of good character, and the narration of any of them is to be accepted even if he is not known by name. Hence they said: Not knowing the name of the Sahaabi does not affect the validity of the hadeeth.

The evidence for what we have said about the Sahaabah is that Allah and His Messenger praised them in a number of texts, and the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) would accept the testimony of any of them once he knew that he was Muslim, and he would not enquire any further about him. It was narrated that Ibn 'Abbaas (may Allah be pleased with him) said: A Bedouin came to the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) and said: I have seen the new moon, meaning Ramadan.

End quote from *Mustalah al-Hadeeth*, from his website.

There is something else that supports what we have stated above, which is the fact that this testimony came at the time of Revelation, and the testimony of the Bedouin could not have been accepted if it was a false testimony concerning one of the acts of worship of the Muslims.

But as the hadeeth is da'eef (weak) there is no need to discuss its meaning. Praise be to Allah the Lord of the Worlds.

And Allah knows best.

Who is the person of good character whose statement about sighting the moon may be accepted?

I read in Question no. 1584 that in order to prove that the new moon of Ramadaan has been sighted, it is sufficient for one trustworthy person of good character to see it.

The question is: who is that person of good character?

Praise be to Allaah.

In Arabic, the word ‘adl (translated here as person of good character) means upright or straight; its opposite is crooked.

In sharee’ah terminology it means the one who fulfils the obligatory duties and does not commit major sins, or persist in committing minor sins.

What is meant by fulfilling obligatory duties is things like the five daily prayers.

And he does not commit major sins such as spreading malicious gossip and backbiting.

As well as being of good character, he must also have strong eyesight, so that his claims may be believed. If he has weak eyesight then his testimony cannot be accepted even if he is of good character, because if he gives testimony even though his eyesight is weak, then he is deluded.

The evidence for that is the fact that Allaah has made strength and trustworthiness among the reasons for offering employment to a person. In the story of Moosa and Shu’ayb, one of Shu’ayb’s two daughters said:

“O my father! Hire him! Verily, the best of men for you to hire is the strong, the trustworthy”

[al-Qasas 28:26 – interpretation of the meaning]

And the ifreet among the jinn who was commanded to bring the throne of the queen of Saba’ said:

“And verily, I am indeed strong and trustworthy for such work”

[al-Naml 27:39]

These two characteristics are the basis of every deed, including giving testimony.

Al-Sharh al-Mumti', 6/323. For more information see *al-Mawsoo'ah al-Fiqhiyyah*, 30/5, Kuwait edition.

Commentary on the verse “Blessed be He Who has placed in the heaven big stars, and has placed therein a great lamp (sun), and a moon giving light” [al-Furqaan 25:61]

What is the interpretation of the verse in which Allah says (interpretation of the meaning): “Blessed be He Who has placed in the heaven big stars, and has placed therein a great lamp (sun), and a moon giving light” [al-Furqaan 25:61]?

Praise be to Allaah.

Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning): *“Blessed be He Who has placed in the heaven big stars, and has placed therein a great lamp (sun), and a moon giving light” [al-Furqaan 25:61].*

And He says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And indeed, We have put the big stars in the heaven and We beautified it for the beholders”

[al-Hijr 15:16]

“By the heaven holding the big stars”

[al-Burooj 85:1].

The words “*Blessed be He*” mean: May He be exalted, Whose giving is plentiful and Whose blessings are abundant.

So the Lord, may He be exalted, deserves gratitude, veneration and praise for His blessings.

See: *Tafseer Ibn Katheer*, 6/92; *al-Jaami‘ li Ahkaam al-Qur’aan*, 7/223 and 13/1; *Fath al-Qadeer*, 3/683

“...Who has placed in the heaven big stars, and has placed therein a great lamp (sun), and a moon giving light”

“big stars”: Ibn ‘Abbaas, Mujaahid, al-Dahhaak, al-Hasan, Qataadah and al-Saddi stated that “*burooj*” [translated here as “big stars”] refers to stars.

Tafseer Ibn Katheer (8/363)

Shaykh al-Sa‘di (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

Allah says, describing His perfect power and His Mercy towards His creation:

“And indeed, We have put the big stars in the heaven” i.e., stars like towers, and great signs by which man may navigate in the darkness on land and sea, *“and We beautified it for the beholders”*[*al-Hijr 15:16*], for were it not for the stars, this wondrous sight in the heavens would not exist. This is something that calls those who gaze upon it to ponder it, seek its meaning and see it as evidence of its Creator. End quote.

Tafseer al-Sa’di, 1/430

And it was said that *burooj* refers to the constellations. Al-Shawkaani (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

What is meant by *burooj* is the groups of stars, i.e., their constellations. And it was said that it refers to big stars, but the former is more correct. They are called *burooj*, which refers to lofty palaces, because they are like high built dwellings. The word *burj* is derived from *tabarruj*, which refers to an open display. End quote.

Fath al-Qadeer, 4/122

The word “*a lamp*” refers to the sun, and “*a moon giving light*” means it shines.

Ibn Katheer (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

“and has placed therein a great lamp” refers to the shining sun.

“and a moon giving light” means it shines with the light of another.

To sum up, what the verse means is: Exalted and venerated be Allah, Whose giving is plentiful, for His blessings upon His creation are evident. He is the One Who, by His grace, has adorned the lowest heaven with these great stars and planets, and the sun and the moon which give light by night and day. He has created that as part of His perfect blessings to His creation; His blessings are vast and His generosity and kindness are immense. So let them ponder the great signs that are above them, and the blessings that they enjoy, so that they might believe in their Lord and give thanks to Him.

And Allaah knows best.

The date for ‘Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha is based on sighting of the new moon

I have a question about the dates of the Eids...I know the Eidul Fitr is after the month of Ramadhan and there is always dispute amongst this day (some will celebrate it on the 29th, while others celebrate it on the 30th), but in regards to the Eid al-Adha, does this day coincide with what the hujjaj are doing in Makkah, or can this day differ according to the different countries others are in?

Praise be to Allaah.

Firstly:

The difference among the Muslims with regard to determining the first day of Ramadaan and the time for Eid al-Fitr stems from the differences of opinion among the fuqaha' concerning the well known issue, which is whether sighting of the new moon in one country becomes binding for all other countries, or should each country have its own sighting. This also applies to determining the date for Eid al-Adha.

This is a matter that is subject to ijtihaad, and each group of scholars has produced its evidence, and both groups may even quote the same text as evidence. This has already been discussed in the answer to question no. [1248](#).

The view that sighting of the moon in one country becomes binding for all other countries is the view of the majority of scholars, and was the view favoured by Shaykh Ibn Baaz (may Allaah have mercy on him), as is stated in *Majmoo' al-Fataawa* (15/77).

The view that there may be differences in sighting between different countries is the more correct view according to the Shaafa'is, and was the view favoured by Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah, and by Shaykh Ibn 'Uthaymeen among contemporary scholars. We have quoted his fatwa in the answer to question no. [40720](#).

Secondly:

The differences among Muslims with regard to Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha is based on this difference of scholarly opinion, and it is the same for both Eids. Shaykh Ibn Baaz (may Allaah have mercy on him) said, after mentioning the

difference of opinion among the scholars about different moon sighting in different countries at the beginning and end of the month:

It seems to me that the differences in moon sightings do not matter, and that what must be done is to follow the sighting of the moon with regard to starting and ending the fast and offering the sacrifice when it is proven according to sharee'ah that the moon has been sighted in any land.

Then he said: Whether or not we say that differences in sighting are valid, it seems that the ruling is the same for both Ramadaan and Eid al-Adha, and there is no difference between them according to what I know of sharee'ah. End quote.

Majmoo' Fataawa Ibn Baaz (15/79).

In the fatwa of Shaykh Ibn 'Uthaymeen (may Allaah have mercy on him) referred to above, it says that differences in moon sighting should be followed with regard to Eid al-Adha just as they are followed with regard to the beginning and end of Ramadaan.

Based on this, there is no problem if Eid al-Adha is on Friday in one country and on Saturday in another, and so on, based on the differences in moon sighting.

The same may be said with regard to the fast of Ramadaan, fasting the day of 'Arafah and fasting 'Ashoora', because these are things that have to do with the sighting of the moon, and the ruling on whether the month has begun or not.

And Allaah knows best.

How can he claim that it is the day of ‘Arafah when he is in a country that differs with Makkah with regard to sighting the new moon?

I've read in your fatwas, this will mean for non-pilgrims the 9th day for fasting is different for those following the regional opinion of eid ul adha to the 9th day in saudi arabia e.g. your 9th day for fasting in the uk may be when it is the 10th day of eid in saudi.

Ok that i understand. The bit I'm not sure about is:

I've read in a book, that you should do duaas on the day of arafat 9th day, just like the pilgrims are doing, its good day for duas even for non pilgrims to be done simultaneously. This can easily be done if you are following the opinion there is one eid for all, since your 9th day will match.

However, how can the above be done if you are following the regional opinion, since the 9th day may differentiate, e.g. you will end up doing duas on different 9th day to saudi, hence you will not be doing it simultaneously when the pilgrims are doing it?

e.g. lets say its 9th day of arafat in saudi, but in the uk, you are following regional opinion and for you its the 8th day, do you start doing the duaas in order to do them simultaneously on the same day with the pilgrims even though its the 8th day for you in the uk? (or do you wait till its your 9th day), in which case it will not be simultaneous because the uk's 9th day will be the 10th day in saudi?.

Praise be to Allaah.

The day of ‘Arafah and the fast thereon is the ninth day of the month of Dhu’l-Hijjah, which is defined for each country according to their sighting of the new moon of Dhu’l-Hijjah. So it may be on Thursday for the people of Makkah, and for others it may be on Wednesday or Saturday. It is not essential to follow the people of Makkah when there are differences in the sighting of the new moon. This is the most correct of the scholarly views, that each country has its own sighting when there is a difference concerning that.

If the Muslims in Britain have sighted the new moon, then the Muslims in that country should follow their sighting, otherwise they should follow the sighting of the country closest to them. See the answer to question no. [40720](#).

Secondly:

There is a great deal of virtue in offering supplication (du‘aa’) on the day of ‘Arafah, because of the hadeeth of ‘Abd-Allah ibn ‘Amr ibn al-‘Aas (may Allah be pleased with him), according to which the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “The best of supplication is supplication of the day of Arafat, and the best of what I and the Prophets before me said is: *Laa ilaaha illa Allah wahdahu, laa shareeka lah, lahu’l-mulk wa lahu’l-hamd wa humwa ‘ala kulli shay’in qadeer* (There is no god but Allah alone, with no partner or associate; His is the Dominion, to Him be praise, and He has power over all things).”

Narrated by al-Tirmidhi (3585) and classed as hasan by al-Albaani in *Saheeh al-Targheeb*, 1536.

Does this virtue apply only to those who are in ‘Arafat, or does it include other places too?

Concerning that there is a difference of opinion among the scholars, which has been discussed previously in the answer to question no. [70782](#)

According to the opinion that it includes other countries and places too, the same may be said concerning it as is said above. So each person should offer supplication on the ninth day of Dhu’l-Hijjah, according to the sighting of the new moon in his country, even if the pilgrims stood in ‘Arafat on the previous day or will do so on the following day.

And Allah knows best.

If he follows the moon sighting from another country, is it acceptable to delay the Eid prayer so that he can pray with the people in his country?

Regarding starting fast and breaking fast times in Ramadan month, I don't observe a certain crescent, but I start my fasting of the holy month based on testimony of two straight Muslims . The problem is that the people of my country always start fast one day later and breaking fast one day earlier than all Muslim majority all over the world. I am much of the opinion that we should all be unified in fast times, so I fast and break fast with the majority. We are all Muslims in Islam countries from Indonesia to Morocco. My question is about the Eid prayer, I can't travel to pray Eid, if I pray it with my country (knowing that this way it will be later), is it acceptable? Or should I not pray with them (then I miss reward and blessings of it)? Finally, I find nothing to say but "All power of change is really Allah's".

Praise be to Allaah.

If the people of your country rely on moon sighting as prescribed in sharee'ah, then you should start and end the fast with them, and you should not differ from them and follow the moonsighting of another country, because the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: "The fast is the day when you fast and al-Fitr is the day when you break the fast, and al-Adha is the day when you offer the sacrifice." Narrated by al-Tirmidhi, 697, who said: some of the scholars interpreted this hadeeth as meaning that the beginning and end of the fast should be observed with the main body of Muslims and the majority of the people. The hadeeth was classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in *Saheeh al-Tirmidhi*.

If you follow the madhhab of those who think that sighting the moon in one country is binding upon all countries, and this means that Eid for you comes before their Eid, then you should conceal the fact that you have broken the fast and offer the Eid prayer with them on the following day.

Shaykh Ibn 'Uthaymeen (may Allah have mercy on him) said:... If you think that the first opinion should be followed and that if the sighting of the new moon is proven in any part of the Muslim world in the manner prescribed in sharee'ah and that it is binding to act upon that, but your country does not follow that and follows one of the two other opinions, then you should not openly show that you

are differing from them, because of the fitnah and confusion and arguments that may result from that. You can fast secretly at the beginning of Ramadan and break the fast secretly at the beginning of Shawwaal. As for differing openly, that is not appropriate and it is not something that is enjoined by Islam.

End quote from *Majmoo‘ Fataawa al-Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymeen*, 19/44.

And Allah knows best.

Differences in moon sighting between countries and its effect on those who travel from one to another

Muslim brother observed fasting whole Ramdaan and attended Eid Al Fitr prayer too. Then he travelled towards east and reached his home country. The next day in his home country still the Ramdaan month is going on. Whether he has to observe fast again according to the home land or since he fast whole Ramdaan before his travel, no need to continue fast along with the local people of his home land.

Praise be to Allaah.

Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymeen (may Allaah have mercy on him) was asked about a man who fasts twenty-nine days and attends Eid on the thirtieth day in the country where he was fasting, then on the morning of Eid he travels to another country when he is not fasting, but he finds the people there fasting. Should he fast or should he continue not fasting and regarding that day as Eid?

He replied: You do not have to refrain from eating and drinking, because you broke your fast in a legitimate manner. So in your case it is a day when you are permitted to eat and drink, and you do not have to refrain from that. If you could not see the sun in one country then you traveled to another country where you could see the sun before it set, then you do not have to fast that day.

And he was asked: if we start fasting in Saudi Arabia, then we travel to our homelands in eastern Asia during the month of Ramadaan where the hijri month comes a day later, should we fast thirty-one days, and if they fast twenty-nine days should we break our fast or not?

He replied: If a person travels from a country where he fasted at the beginning of the month to a country where Eid al-Fitr comes later, he should continue his fast and not break his fast until they do. This is like the case where a person travels from his city to a place where sunset comes later; he should continue his fast until the sun sets even if that takes twenty hours, unless he breaks his fast because of traveling, as he is entitled to do. The opposite also applies, such as if he were to travel to a place where they have stopped fasting before he has completed thirty days – he should break the fast with them, and if the month was thirty days he should make up a day, and if it was twenty-nine days he does not have to do

anything. He should make it up if he did less than a month, and if he did more than a month then he did more. And Allaah knows best.

Majmoo' al-Fataawa, 19.

Is moonsighting essential?

Is it essential for the people to sight the new moon of Ramadaan?.

Praise be to Allaah.

The majority of scholars are of the view that sighting the new moon of Ramadaan on the first night of the month is a communal obligation, and if all the people fail to do it then they are sinning. This is also the Hanafi view.

Some of the fuqaha' were of the view that moon sighting is mustahabb.

It says in *Majma' al-Anhaar* (1/283): It is a communal obligation for the people to seek the new moon on the evening of the twenty-ninth of Sha'baan or Ramadaan, and also of Dhu'l-Qa'dah, and it is obligatory for the ruler to enjoin the people to do that.

It says in *al-Fataawa al-Hindiyyah* (1/197): It is obligatory for the people to seek the new moon on the twenty-ninth of Sha'baan at the time of sunset, and if they see it they must fast. If it is cloudy then they must complete the month as thirty days. End quote.

See: *Fath al-Qadeer* (2/313).

It says in *Kashshaaf al-Qinaa'* (2/300): It is mustahabb for the people on the night before the thirtieth of Sha'baan to sight the new moon of Ramadaan.

It is mustahabb to sight the new moon so as to be on the safe side with regard to fasting and so as to avoid disputes. It was narrated that 'Aa'ishah (may Allaah be pleased with her) said: The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) used to count the days in Sha'baan more carefully than at any other time, then he would fast when he sighted (the new moon) of Ramadaan. Narrated by al-Daaraqutni with a saheeh isnaad.

It was narrated from Abu Hurayrah in a marfoo' report: "Count the days of Sha'baan for the sake of Ramadaan." Narrated by al-Tirmidhi. End quote.

This hadeeth was classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in *Saheeh al-Tirmidhi* (678).

It says in *Tuhfat al-Ahwadhi*: Ibn Hajar (may Allaah have mercy on him) said: They should strive to count its days accurately, and that is by means of watching the waxing and waning of the moon, so that they will be certain of when to expect the new moon of Ramadaan and will not miss any of it. End quote.

In *al-Mawsoo'ah al-Fiqhiyyah* (22/23) it says: Sighting the new moon is something that is decreed by the fact that some acts of worship are connected to specific times. It is prescribed for the Muslims to strive in seeking it and it is more important on the night before the thirtieth of Sha'baan, in order to find out whether Ramadaan has begun, and on the night before the thirtieth of Ramadaan in order to find out whether the month has ended and Shawwaal has begun, and on the night before the thirtieth of Dhu'l-Qa'dah to find out if Dhu'l-Hijjah has begun. These three months have to do with two of the pillars of Islam, namely fasting and Hajj, and the setting of the dates for 'Eid al-Fitr and 'Eid al-Adha.

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) encouraged seeking the sighting of the moon. It was narrated that Abu Hurayrah said: The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "Fast when you see it and break the fast when you see it, and if it is too cloudy then complete the number (of days) of Sha'baan as thirty." And it was narrated from 'Abd-Allaah ibn 'Umar (may Allaah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "The month is twenty-nine days, so do not fast until you see it, and if it is cloudy then complete the month as thirty days." The first hadeeth enjoins fasting the month of Ramadaan when its new moon is sighted or when the month of Sha'baan is completed with thirty days, and it enjoins ending the fast when the new moon of Shawwaal is sighted, or when Ramadaan is completed with thirty days. The second hadeeth forbids fasting Ramadaan before the new moon is sighted or before Sha'baan has been completed if it is cloudy.

And there is a hadeeth narrated from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) in which he enjoined paying attention to the new moon of Sha'baan because of Ramadaan. He said: "Count the days of Sha'baan carefully for the sake of Ramadaan." This hadeeth shows the importance of paying attention to the month of Sha'baan in order to work out when Ramadaan starts. It was narrated from 'Aa'ishah (may Allaah be pleased with her) that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) used to count the days in Sha'baan more carefully than at any other time, then he would fast when he sighted (the new moon) of Ramadaan, and if it was cloudy he would count thirty days and then fast.

The commentators said: i.e., he would make sure to count the days of Sha'baan carefully in order to begin the fast of Ramadaan at the right time. During the lifetime of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) and after he died, the Sahaabah (may Allaah be pleased with them) were concerned with sighting the new moon of Ramadaan and they used to look for it. It was narrated

that ‘Abd-Allaah ibn ‘Umar (may Allaah be pleased with him) said: The people sighted the new moon and I told the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) about that, and he fasted and told the people to fast.

It was narrated that Anas ibn Maalik (may Allaah be pleased with him) said: We were with ‘Umar between Makkah and Madeenah and we looked for the new moon. I was a man who had keen eyesight and I sighted it, but no one else claimed that he had seen it except me. I started saying to ‘Umar: Do you not see it? And he could not see it.

The Hanafis regard sighting the new moon of Ramadaan on the night before the thirtieth of Sha’baan as a communal obligation, and if they sight it they should fast, otherwise they should complete the month (as thirty days) and then fast, because that which is essential to performance of an obligatory duty is also obligatory.

The Hanbalis say that it is mustahabb to sight the new moons so as to be on the safe side with regard to fasting and so as to avoid disputes. We did not find any clear view from the Maalikis and Shaafa’is on this issue. End quote.

Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymeen (may Allaah have mercy on him) was asked: Are all the Muslims sinning if none of them sights the new moon at the beginning or end of Ramadaan?

He replied: Sighting the new moon of Ramadaan or Shawaal is something that was established at the time of the Sahaabah (may Allaah be pleased with them), because Ibn ‘Umar (may Allaah be pleased with him) said: The people looked for the new moon and I told the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) that I had seen it, so he fasted and told the people to fast.

Undoubtedly the way of the Sahaabah (may Allaah be pleased with them) is the best and most complete guidance. End quote from *48 Su’aalan fi’l-Sawm*, no. 21.

So it seems that sighting the new moon of Ramadaan, Shawwaal and Dhu’l-Hijjah is a communal obligation, because it is connected to two of the pillars of Islam: fasting and Hajj.

And Allaah knows best..

Do different times of moonrise matter, and what should Muslim communities in the West do

Since the prophet said "Begin fasting after sighting the moon", how can muslims be fasting one on Tuesday in one part of the world and wednesday in another part. We should all begin our fast at the same time regardless of where we live. We are students in the U.S. and Canada, and we face the same problem every year at the beginning of Ramadaan, because the Muslims are split into three groups: A group that fasts when the new moon is sighted in the city in which they live. A group that fasts when fasting starts in Saudi Arabia. A group that fasts when they hear news from the Muslim students' union in the U.S. and Canada which watches for the new moon in different parts of America, and as soon as the new moon is sighted in one city, they spread the news to different Islamic centres so that the Muslims in America can start fasting on the same day, despite the great distances between the different cities. Which group should we follow? Whose sighting of the moon should we rely on? Please give us a fatwa, may Allaah reward you. Praise be to Allaah.

Firstly: the fact that the moon rises at different times in different places is a well-established fact; no scholar disputes this. However, the scholars differ as to whether this matters or not.

Secondly: the question as to whether different times of moonrise is something that matters is a theoretical question in which ijtihaad is permissible. Those who have knowledge of science and religion differ on this matter, and this difference of opinion is permissible; the one who has the correct opinion will have two rewards, one for being right and one for making ijtihaad; the one whose opinion is wrong will still be rewarded for his ijtihaad.

The scholars' differences on this matter may be described as one of two: some of them thought that the differences in the times of the moon's rising was of significance, and others thought that it was not. Both groups cite evidence from the Qur'aan and Sunnah, and maybe even quote the same text, such as the aayah (interpretation of the meaning): *"They ask you (O Muhammad) about the new moons. Say: these are signs to mark fixed periods of time for mankind and for the pilgrimage..."* [al-Baqarah

2:189]and the hadeeth, “Fast when you see it [the new moon] and stop fasting when you see it...” The difference is one of interpretation of the texts, as each group has its own methods of deriving evidence.

Thirdly: the committee has looked at the issue of confirming the new moon by calculations and what was said on this matter in the Qur’aan and Sunnah, and they have studied the opinions of the scholars on this matter. They decided unanimously that astronomical calculations do not count when it comes to confirming the new moon for shar’i purposes, because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “Fast when you see it [the new moon] and stop fasting when you see it...” and also: “Do not fast until you see it [the new moon] and do not stop fasting until you see it...”, and because of the evidence that is derived from these ahaadeeth.

The Standing Committee on Scientific Research and Fatwas (*al-Lajnah al-Daa’imah li’l-Buhooth al-Ilmiyyah wa’l-Iftaa’*) thinks that the Muslim students’ union (or any other group representing the Muslim community) in countries where the government is not Islamic should take the place of an Islamic government in the matter of confirming the new moon for the people living in those non-Islamic countries.

On the basis of the above, this union has the choice of two options: either to consider the differences in times of moonrise to be of significance, or not to do so. Then they should inform all the Muslims in their country what their opinion is, and the Muslims have to follow what they have been told, so as to unite the Muslims in their fasting and to put an end to disputes and confusion. Everyone who lives in those countries should try to sight the moon in the place where they are living, and if one or more trustworthy persons sight the moon, they should fast according to that and tell the union to spread the news. This is at the beginning of Ramadaan; at the end of the month there has to be two witnesses to see the new moon of Shawwaal or the completion of thirty days of Ramadaan, because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “Fast when you see it [the new moon] and stop fasting when you see it, and if it is cloudy then complete the month with thirty days.” And Allaah knows best.

Eclipse prayer after dawn

We went out to pray Fajr prayer last Thursday, the fourteenth of Ramadaan, and we saw that the moon was eclipsed. What should we have done?.

Praise be to Allaah.

The sun and moon are two of the signs of Allaah. By means of lunar and solar eclipses, Allaah reminds His slaves of the Day of Resurrection, the Day on which their light will disappear. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“So, when the sight shall be dazzled.

8. And the moon will be eclipsed.

9. And the sun and moon will be joined together (by going one into the other or folded up or deprived of their light)”

[al-Qiyaamah 75:7-9]

So by means of this sign Allaah reminds us of that Day. See also question no. [5901](#). And the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) hastened to pray when that happened.

When you saw the eclipse when you were going out for Fajr prayer, you had the choice of starting with the eclipse prayer, as suggested by some scholars, because of the command narrated from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) to hasten to do that. But if you started with Fajr first, this is also good because the obligatory prayer should come first. This may also serve an interest, especially since the eclipse could not be seen except at the time of the iqamah, so it may have been too difficult for the people, especially those who had stayed up at night during the blessed month, if the imam had started with the eclipse prayer. So he started with Fajr prayer, to enable those who wanted to leave to do so, as that would be easier for the people; this is also less likely to cause confusion, especially for those who had come for Fajr and did not know that the imam was going to offer the eclipse prayer.

Why are the Muslims not united in their fasting?

Why are the Muslims not united in their fasting even though there is only one new moon for Ramadaan? In the past there was the excuse of there being no media or means of communication.

Praise be to Allaah.

Firstly:

The most likely reason for the differences in the start of the fast from one country to another is the difference in sighting the new moon. Such differences are well known and it makes sense that there are such differences.

Based on this, it is not possible to expect all the Muslims to start fasting at the same time, because this would mean that some of them were starting to fast before the new moon had been sighted and even before it had appeared.

Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymeen (may Allaah have mercy on him) was asked about those who call for the ummah to be united in fasting and for the moon sighting to be based on its sighting in Makkah. He said:

This is impossible from an astronomical point of view, because the sighting of the new moon, as Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah said, differs, according to the scientists who are well-versed in this field. Because it differs, then each country should have its own ruling, according to the reports and according to science.

The evidence from reports is the verse in which Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“So whoever of you sights (the crescent on the first night of) the month (of Ramadan i.e. is present at his home), he must observe Sawm (fasts) that month”

[al-Baqarah 2:185]

If it so happens that people in a remote region of the world do not see the new moon whereas the people of Makkah do see it, then how can the words of this verse apply to those who have not seen the new moon? The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “Fast when you see it and stop fasting when you see it.” (Agreed upon). So if the people of Makkah, for example, see it, then

how can we expect the people of Pakistan and countries further east to start fasting, when we know that the new moon has not yet appeared in their region, and the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) connected the start of fasting to the sighting of the moon?

The scientific evidence is the correct analogy which we cannot contradict. We know that dawn appears in eastern regions of the earth before it appears in western regions, so if dawn has appeared in eastern regions, do we have to stop eating even though it is still night where we are? The answer is no. If the sun has set in eastern regions but it is still day where we are, is it permissible for us to break our fast? The answer is no. And the new moon is exactly like the sun, except that the timing of the new moon is monthly and the timing of the sun is daily. The One Who said (interpretation of the meaning):

“and eat and drink until the white thread (light) of dawn appears to you distinct from the black thread (darkness of night), then complete your Sawm (fast) till the nightfall”

[*al-Baqarah 2:187*] is also the One Who said (interpretation of the meaning):

“So whoever of you sights (the crescent on the first night of) the month (of Ramadan i.e. is present at his home), he must observe Sawm (fasts) that month”

[*al-Baqarah 2:185*]

So the evidence of both the texts and science indicates that we should establish a separate ruling for each place when it comes to starting and ending the fast, and this should be connected to the physical sign which Allaah has described in His Book and which His Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) established in his Sunnah, namely the sighting of the moon and the sighting of the sun or dawn.

End quote from *Fataawa Arkaan al-Islam*, p. 451.

And he said, explaining this analogy and supporting the argument of those who say that there should be different moon sightings:

They say that the monthly timings should be like the daily sightings. Just as different countries vary in the start and end of the fast each day, so too they must differ in the start and end of the month-long fast. The difference in daily timings is well known according to Muslim consensus; those who are in the east start fasting before those who are in the west, and they also break the fast first.

If we accept the differences in sighting with regard to daily timings, then we should also accept it with regard to the month.

No one can say that the verse *“and eat and drink until the white thread (light) of dawn appears to you distinct from the black thread (darkness of night), then complete your Sawm (fast) till the nightfall”* and the words of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) *“When the night has come from here and the day has departed from here and the sun has set, then the faster may break his fast”* are general in meaning and apply to all the Muslims in every region.

The same applies to the verse *“So whoever of you sights (the crescent on the first night of) the month (of Ramadan i.e. is present at his home), he must observe Sawm (fasts) that month”* and the words of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) *“When you see it fast and when you see it stop fasting.”*

As you see, this opinion is very strong, and the analogy is sound, the analogy between the monthly timing and the daily timing.

End quote from *Fataawa Ramadaan*, compiled by Ashraf ‘Abd al-Maqsood, p. 104

The Council of Senior Scholars issued an important statement on this topic, the text of which is as follows:

Firstly: The difference in moon sighting is something which is well known, and there is no difference among the scholars concerning this. Rather the difference of scholarly opinion has to do with whether the difference in moon sighting matters or not.

Secondly: The issue of whether the difference in moon sighting matters or not is a theoretical matter in which there is room for ijtihaad. Even people of great knowledge and piety differed concerning this matter. This is a type of difference which is acceptable, where the one who makes ijtihaad and gets it right will have two rewards, one for his ijtihaad and the other for getting it right, and the one who gets it wrong will be rewarded for his ijtihaad.

The scholars differed concerning this matter and there are two points of view. One is that the difference in moon sighting matters and the other is that it does not matter. Each group quotes evidence from the Qur’aan and Sunnah, and sometimes they quote the same text, such as when they both quote the verse (interpretation of the meaning):

“They ask you (O Muhammad) about the new moons. Say: These are signs to mark fixed periods of time for mankind and for the pilgrimage”

[al-Baqarah 2:189]

and the words of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), “Fast when you see it and stop fasting when you see it.”

That is because of different understandings of the texts, and different ways in which each group derives evidence from them.

Based on the considerations that the Council has seen and examined, and based on the fact that the difference of opinion on this matter does not have any effect that may lead to undesirable consequences, since this religion appeared fourteen centuries ago and we do not know of any period during which the ummah was united in moon sighting, the members of the Council of Senior Scholars think that matters should be left as they are and that this subject should not be stirred up. Each Islamic state should have the right to choose whichever opinion it wishes, based on the suggestions of its own scholars, because each view has its evidence and proofs.

Thirdly: The Council has studied the issue of proving the new moon by means of calculation, and what has been narrated in the Qur’aan and Sunnah, and they have studied the comments of the scholars on this matter. They have decided unanimously that astronomical calculations carry no weight in determining the new moon with regard to Islamic matters, because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said, “Fast when you see it and stop fasting when you see it.” And he (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “Do not fast until you see it, and do not stop fasting until you see it.” And because of other evidence to that effect.

End quote, from *Fataawa al-Lajnah al-Daa’imah*, 10/102.

Should he follow the local people with regard to starting and ending the fast?

The sighting of the moon in my country was delayed by two days, and there is a group of people who follow the general sighting and fast with Saudi and other neighbouring lands. I started to follow this group this year and I fasted one day before my country. Do I have to make up the fast, knowing that the sighting here was proved after that? Should I break the fast with my country or when the moon is sighted anywhere?.

Praise be to Allaah.

In the answer to question no. [12660](#) we stated that if the Muslim is in a Muslim country that relies on sighting of the moon to mark the beginning and end of the month, then he must follow that country, and it is not permissible for him to differ from it in starting and ending the fast.

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “The fast is the day when you fast, breaking the fast is the day when you break the fast, and sacrifice is the day when you offer the sacrifice.” Narrated by Abu Dawood (2324) and al-Tirmidhi (697); classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in *Saheeh al-Tirmidhi*.

The imams differed with regard to the question of whether, if the moon is sighted in one place, all the Muslims are obliged to fast, or are only the nearby countries obliged to fast and not the distant countries, or are those whose sighting coincides with that sighting obliged to fast, and not those whose sighting did not coincide with it? There are several opinions.

The Muslim should follow the scholars of his own country in whichever of these views they believe to be more correct, based on the evidence that they have available, and he should not start or end the fast on his own.

We have quoted the statement of the Council of Senior Scholars on this issue in the answer to question no. [50487](#), in which they said:

... the members of the Council of Senior Scholars think that matters should be left as they are and that this subject should not be stirred up. Each Islamic state should have the right to choose whichever opinion it wishes, based on the suggestions of its own scholars, because each view has its evidence and proofs.

Please read this statement in full, because it is important.

Based on this, you should follow your country which relies on the sighting of the moon to establish the beginning and end of the month and the beginning and end of the fast. If you do that, you will have done well and you are not required to make up the fast.

And Allaah knows best.

Is it possible to fast al-ayyaam al-beed based on the dates published in newspapers or calendars?

I am well aware that al-ayyaam al-beed are the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth of every hijri month, and that they should be defined on the basis of sighting the new moon, not on the basis of calendars. But my question is: how can I find out when the new month has begun on the basis of sighting the new moon, which is not announced except in the case of Ramadan and Hajj? Can I rely on the date which you put beneath the banner of the website? Especially since I have compared it with the calendars of Umm al-Qura and others, and I found that all the calendars are in harmony with one another, whereas your website is one day ahead of them, therefore I thought that you put the date according to moon-sighting as prescribed in sharee'ah rather than based on calendars?

Praise be to Allah.

Al-ayyaam al-beed are the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth of every hijri month. A hadeeth concerning them was narrated by Abu Dharr (may Allah be pleased with him) who said: The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said to me: "If you fast any day of the month, then fast on the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth." Narrated by at-Tirmidhi (761) and an-Nasaa'i (2424); classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in *Saheeh at-Targheeb* (1038).

The beginning of the month is known from sighting of the new moon. If it is possible to ask those who are involved in moon-sighting at the beginning of each month, then that is good. Or you can rely on the moon sighting in some countries which announce it every month. Otherwise, one may fast on the basis of calendars, as it is acceptable to base one's actions on what is most likely to be the case.

Shaykh Ibn Baaz (may Allah have mercy on him) was asked:

It is no secret that people are not aware of the beginning of the ordinary months, so what is the situation with regard to fasting al-ayyaam al-beed every month? What I mean is: how can a person know when these days are so that he may fast at that time? I hope that you can advise us, may Allah reward you with good.

He replied: It is allowed to fast on those days according to calendars, acting on what appears most likely to be the case. If he observes this fast on other days, that

is acceptable, because the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) encouraged doing these fasts in every month, but he did not limit it to al-ayaam al-beed, as it is narrated in *as-Saheehayn* from the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) that he said to ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Amr ibn al-‘Aas (may Allah be pleased with him): “Fast three days of every month, for a good deed brings a tenfold reward, and that will be like fasting for a lifetime.” In *as-Saheehayn* it is narrated that Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) said: The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) advised me to do three things: to fast three days of every month, to offer two rak‘ahs of Duha prayer, and to pray Witr before sleeping. And there are many hadeeths concerning this matter. The individual has the choice: if he wishes he may do them together (consecutively), or if he wishes he may separate them, because the hadeeths are general in meaning and do not specify that these fasts must be done consecutively. And Allah is the source of strength.

End quote from *Majmoo‘ Fataawa Ibn Baaṣ* (15/282)

If we assume that we were mistaken about one of these days, that does not matter; rather there is the hope that the one who fasts will be granted the reward in full, because he has an excuse and he did what he was able to.

Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymeen (may Allah have mercy on him) said: Fasting three days of every month is Sunnah. The Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said that fasting three days of every month is like fasting for an entire lifetime. But it is preferable to do that on the ayaam al-beed: the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth of the month. If that is not possible because a woman has her period, or because the individual is travelling or has a guest or gets tired or is sick, and the like, then the reward may also be obtained by the one who fasts days others than these three. ‘Aa’ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said: The Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) used to fast on three days of every month and he would not mind whether he fasted them at the beginning of the month, or in the middle, or at the end. So this matter is broad in scope. Fasting three days of every month is Sunnah, whether that is at the beginning of the month or in the middle or at the end. But if it is during the three ayaam al-beed, that is preferable. But if he was unable to fast because of some reason or need, then we hope that Allah, may He be exalted, will decree reward for everyone who has the habit of fasting these days, but is not able to do so because there was some reason for that.

End quote from *Fataawa Noor ‘ala ad-Darb*.

With regard to our website, the date on it is based on calendars, except in the case of Ramadan and Dhu'l-Hijjah.

And Allah knows best.

He is living in Germany – should he fast with the European Islamic Society or with Saudi?

We are living in Germany and the problem is that the imam of one mosque says “We will fast with Saudi” but in another mosque they said, “We will fast following the European Islamic Society which supposed to have undertaken the mission to watch for the moon.” What is your opinion? May Allaah reward you with good?.

Praise be to Allaah.

If the European Islamic Society depends on sighting the moon, then it is better for you to follow them with regard to starting and ending the fast.

There is an ancient and well known difference of scholarly opinion concerning this matter – should each land have its own sighting or should everyone follow those who see the moon even if the sightings differ from one country to another? This difference of opinion is permissible and is based on ijtihaad, and there is no sin on anyone if he follows one of these two opinions, according to the evidence that becomes clear to him. Perhaps the more correct view is that the difference in sightings is relevant in this issue. We have explained the evidence for this view in the answer to question no. [50487](#). Among the evidence that supports that is the report narrated by Muslim (1819) from Kurayb, that Umm al-Fadl bint al-Haarith sent him to Mu’aawiyah in Syria. He said: I came to Syria and did her errand, then the new moon of Ramadaan came when I was in Syria, and I saw the new moon on Thursday night. Then I came to Madeenah at the end of the month and ‘Abd-Allaah ibn ‘Abbaas (may Allaah be pleased with him) asked me about the new moon. He said: “When did you see the new moon?” I said: “We saw it on Thursday night.” He said: “Did you see it?” I said: “Yes, and the people saw it, and they fasted, and Mu’aawiyah fasted.” He said: “But we saw it on Friday night, and we will carry on fasting until we complete thirty days or we see it.” I said: “Is not the sighting and fasting of Mu’aawiyah sufficient for you?” He said: “No; that is what the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) enjoined upon us.”

This indicates that when lands are far apart, each land has its own sighting, and it is not obligatory for everyone to fast when one land sees the moon.

And Allaah knows best.

Delaying Eid prayer until after the day of Eid

Is it permissible to delay the Eid prayer from the night on which the new moon of Shawwaal is sighted until the second day, so as to enable Muslims who are working in factories and offices to get permission from their bosses to take the day off?

Because the day of Eid is not known to them in advance, so it is difficult for them to tell their bosses the specific day that they want to take off.

Praise be to Allaah.

Eid prayer is fard kifaayah (a communal obligation). If sufficient people undertake to do it then the rest are absolved of sin. Some of the scholars are of the view that it is fard 'ayn (an individual obligation) like Jumu'ah prayer. Because the Islamic centers organize the Eid prayers according to the sighting of the moon, those who cannot attend are absolved of this communal obligation. It is not permissible to delay the prayer until the second or third day of Shawwaal so that all the Muslims in London can attend, because this delay is contrary to that on which the Sahaabah and those who came after them were agreed. We do not know of any scholar who suggested this. Yes, it is permissible to delay the prayer until the second day if they did not know it was Eid until after the sun had reached its zenith.

And Allaah is the Source of strength.

Salaat al-Kusoof (prayer when there is an eclipse)

There will be an eclipse of the moon and sun in the UK, Europe and most of the middle east and asia on 11 August 1999.

What dua should be read when this happens and if we look at it. Please answer this as soon as possible as it is a rare occurrence, and one that many people will find useful when looking at it.

Praise be to Allaah.

Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“It is He Who made the sun a shining thing and the moon as a light and measured out for it stages that you might know the number of years and the reckoning. Allaah did not create this but in truth. He explains the Ayaat in detail for people who have knowledge.” [Yoonus 10:5]

“And from among His Signs are the night and the day, and the sun and the moon. Prostrate yourselves not to the sun” nor to the moon, but prostrate yourselves to Allaah Who created them, if you (really) worship Him” (Fussilat 41:37)

Salaat al-Kusoof is Sunnah mu’akkadah (a confirmed Sunnah) according to the consensus of the scholars. The daleel (evidence) for this is the Sunnah reported from the Messenger of Allaah SAWS (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him)

Eclipses are signs from Allaah by means of which Allaah makes His slaves afraid. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning): *“And We sent not the signs except to warn, and to make them afraid (of destruction)” [al-Israa’ 17:39]*

When the sun was eclipsed at the time of the Messenger of Allaah SAWS (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), he went out rushing nervously to the mosque, dragging his cloak behind him, and led the people in prayer. He told them that the eclipse was one of the signs of Allaah, with which Allaah makes His slaves afraid, and that it may be the cause of punishment coming upon the people. He commanded them to do that which could prevent the punishment, so he commanded them to pray when an eclipse happens, and to make du’aa’, seek His forgiveness, give charity, free slaves and do other righteous deeds so that the punishment would go away and not befall the people. So the eclipse is a reminder

to people, making them afraid so that they will turn back to Allaah and pay attention to Him.

During the Jaahiliyyah, people used to believe that eclipses happened to mark the birth or death of a great person, but the Messenger of Allaah SAWS (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) declared this belief to be false and explained the divine wisdom behind the occurrence of eclipses:

Imaam al-Bukhaari and Muslim narrated that Ibn Mas'ood al-Ansaari said: "the sun was eclipsed the day Ibraaheem the son of the Messenger of Allaah SAWS (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) died, and the people said, 'The sun is eclipsed because of the death of Ibraaheem.' The Messenger of Allaah SAWS (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: 'The sun and the moon are two signs from Allaah, and they do not become eclipsed for the death or the birth of anyone. If you see that, hasten to remember Allaah and to pray.'"

According to another hadeeth in *al-Saheehayn*: "Call on Allaah and pray until [the eclipse] is over."

It is reported in *Saheeh al-Bukhaari* that Abu Moosa said: "These signs that Allaah sends are not for the death or life of anyone, but Allaah makes His slaves afraid through them, so if you see anything of that [eclipses], then hasten to remember Allaah and call on Him and seek His forgiveness."

Allaah causes eclipses to happen to these two mighty signs, the sun and the moon, to teach His slaves and show them that these things are created and are subject to imperfections and changes just like any other created entities. Thus He shows them His perfect ability and that He alone is deserving of worship, as Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning): "*And from among His Signs are the night and the day, and the sun and the moon. Prostrate yourselves not to the sun" nor to the moon, but prostrate yourselves to Allaah Who created them, if you (really) worship Him*" (*Fussilat* 41:37)

The time for Salaat al-Kusoof lasts from the beginning of the eclipse until it is over, because the Prophet SAWS (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "When you see that, then pray." (Agreed upon). According to another hadeeth, "If you see anything of that, then pray until it is over." (Reported by Muslim).

Salaat al-Kusoof should not be done once the eclipse is over, because the time has gone. If an eclipse ends before one knows about it, one does not have to pray, because the reason for this prayer is no longer there.

The way in which Salaat al-Kusoof is done is to pray two Rak'ahs in which Qur'aan is recited aloud, according to the correct one out of the two scholarly opinions. In the first Rak'ah, one should recite *al-Faatihah* and a long soorah such as Soorat al-Baqarah or the equivalent, then do a long rukoo', then raise one's head and say, "*Sami'a Allaahu liman hamidah, Rabbanaa wa laka'l-hamd* (Allaah listens to the one who praises Him; our Lord to You be praise)" after standing upright, as in other prayers. Then one should then recite *al-Faatihah* and another long soorah, shorter than in the first recitation, equivalent in length to *Soorat Aal 'Imraan*. Then one should do another long rukoo' shorter than the first, and when raising one's head, say, "*Sami'a Allaahu liman hamidah, Rabbanaa wa laka'l-hamd hamdan katheeran tayyiban mubaarakan fih, mal' al-samawaati wa mal' al-ard wa mal' ma shi'ta min shay'in ba'd* (Allaah listens to the one who praises Him; our Lord to You be praise, much good and blessed praise, filling heaven and earth and whatever You will besides that)." Then he should do two lengthy sujoods, without making the sitting between them too long. Then one should pray the second rak'ah like the first, with two long rukoo's and two long sujoods, as he did in the first rak'ah. Then he should recite the Tashahhud and say the salaam.

This is the description of Salaat al-Kusoof as prayed by the Messenger of Allaah SAWS (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), as was reported with a number of isnads. Some of these reports are in *al-Sabeehayn*, including the hadeeth narrated by 'Aa'ishah (may Allaah be pleased with her): "The sun was eclipsed at the time of the Messenger of Allaah SAWS (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), and the Messenger of Allaah SAWS (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) went out, stood up and said *Takebeer* ('Allaahu akbar'), and the people formed rows behind him. The Messenger of Allaah SAWS (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) recited a lengthy recitation and did a lengthy rukoo', then he raised his head and said, '*Sami'a Allaahu liman hamidah, Rabbanaa wa laka'l-hamd*.' Then he stood upright and recited another lengthy recitation, shorter than the first. Then he said 'Allaahu akbar' and did another lengthy rukoo', shorter than the first. Then he said, '*Sami'a Allaahu liman hamidah, Rabbanaa wa laka'l-hamd*.' Then he did sujud. Then in the second rak'ah he did likewise, until he had completed four rukoo's and four sujoods, and the eclipse was over before he had finished." (Agreed upon).

It is sunnah to pray Salaat al-Kusoof in jamaa'ah (congregation), because this is what the Prophet SAWS (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) did, but it is permissible to pray it individually, as with all other naafil prayers. However, praying it in congregation is better.

It is sunnah for the imaam to address the people after the prayer, and to warn them against negligence and being led astray, and to tell them to make lots of du'aa' and ask for forgiveness. In *al-Saheeh* it is narrated from 'Aa'ishah (may Allaah be pleased with her) that the Prophet SAWS (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) finished his prayer then addressed the people and started by praising Allaah then he said, "The sun and the moon are two of the signs of Allaah, and they do not become eclipsed for the death or the birth of anyone. If you see that, then call on Allaah, perform salaah, give charity..."

If the prayer ends before the eclipse does, then remember Allaah (dhikr) and call on Him (du'aa') until the eclipse ends. The prayer should not be repeated. If the eclipse ends before the prayer, then the prayer should be completed quickly, but it should not be stopped or cut off abruptly, because Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning): "*and render not vain your deeds*" [Muhammad 47:33]. The prayer should be at the time of the eclipse, because the Prophet SAWS (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "... until it (the eclipse) is over..." and he also said, "... until what you are going through is over ..."

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah said: "Sometimes eclipses last for a long time, and sometimes for a short time, depending on how much of the sun or moon is eclipsed. The entire sun or moon may be eclipsed, or only half of it, or one-third. If it is a total eclipse, then the prayer should last long enough for all of *al-Baqarah* or something of similar length to be recited in the first rak'ah, and in the next rak'ah a shorter recitation is made. There are saheeh ahaadeeth narrated from the Prophet SAWS (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), as we have mentioned, and it is prescribed to shorten the prayer if the reason for it [i.e., the eclipse] is no longer there. So if it is known that the eclipse will not last for long, or if it started to get less, one should still pray, but the prayer should be shortened. This is the opinion of the majority of scholars, because this prayer is prescribed for a specific reason, and if the reason is no longer there and the eclipse is over, one should not pray."

Doubts of one who is interested in Islam

I am a non-Muslim who is very much interested in Islam. I have been trying to do research on my own.

However, I came upon some information that I found rather disturbing. It is regarding the Kaaba and the origin of Islam. I was told that Abraham and Ishmael removed all the idols from the Kaaba, but there was one in particular who's name meant "diety". I read that this is where the name "Allah" came from and that this diety was the pagan Moon god.

His symbol is the crescent moon and Ramadhan is scheduled around lunar activity. I would like an answer to whether or not such a religion existed and is Islam really connected to this pagan practice?

Praise be to Allaah.

Welcome to a lady who is seeking the true religion and is interested in Islam. We ask Allaah to show you the truth and help you to follow it, and to protect you from Shaytaan and his doubts, and the misguidance of the enemies of Islam.

Before I answer your question, I would like to remind you that the way to find out the truth about a religion is to refer to its authentic sources, which in the case of Islam means the Qur'aan, which is the Word of Allaah, and the Sunnah, which is the words of the Prophet of Islam, Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), to whom Allaah sent Revelation.

One of the mistakes made by some of those who investigate Islam is to refer to sources that are not authentic or material written by those who have ulterior motives and who are enemies of Islam spreading lies about it, to put people off and lead them astray from the Way of Allaah.

Turning to your question about the Ka'bah, and Ibraaheem and Ismaa'eel (upon whom be peace), it is very strange to say that they removed all the idols from the Ka'bah except one. This contradicts the historical facts, and does not make sense, because it is known that Ibraaheem and Ismaa'eel were the ones who built the Ka'bah, on the command of Allaah – how could they then have taken idols out of

it? How could there have been any idols in it when they were supervising its construction and maintenance by remembering Allaah and calling people to perform Tawaaf around it and come on pilgrimage to it only for the sake of Allaah? The idols came many years afterwards, when some of the Arabs travelled to the kaafir lands outside the Arabian Peninsula and brought back idols, some of which were placed around the Ka'bah. Then the mushrikeen added more idols until there were 360 of them around the Ka'bah. This remained the case until Allaah sent Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him). This was the dawning of the light of Tawheed which drove out the darkness of idolatry. Through him, Allaah defeated the mushrikeen; he broke the idols and purified the Sacred House, thus restoring the Ka'bah to the pure worship of the One God, as it had been at the time of his forefather Ibraaheem, the Friend (Khaleel) of Allaah.

There follows an account of the building of the Ancient House, from the Qur'aan and the Ahaadeeth of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him). We will begin by quoting from the Qur'aan, where Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

"And (remember) when Ibraaheem said: 'My Lord, make this city (Makkah) a place of security and provide its people with fruits, such of them as believe in Allaah and the Last Day.' He (Allaah) answered, 'As for him who disbelieves, I shall leave him in contentment for a while, then I shall compel him to the torment of the Fire, and worst indeed is that destination!'

And (remember) when Ibraaheem and (his son) Ismaa'eel were raising the foundations of the House (the Ka'bah), (saying): 'Our Lord! Accept (this service) from us. Verily! You are the All-Hearer, the All-Knower.' 'Our Lord! And make us submissive unto You and of our offspring a nation submissive unto You, and show us our manaasik (all the ceremonies of pilgrimage –Hajj and 'Umrah), and accept our repentance. Truly, You are the One Who accepts repentance, the Most Merciful.

'Our Lord! Send amongst them a Messenger of their own, who shall recite unto them Your Verses and instruct them in the Book and al-Hikmah (full knowledge of the Islamic laws and jurisprudence or wisdom or Prophethood, etc.), and sanctify them. Verily, You are the All-Mighty, the All-Wise."

[al-Baqarah 2:126-129]

"And (remember) when We showed Ibraaheem the site of the (Sacred) House, (saying): 'Associate not anything (in worship) with Me, and sanctify My House for those who circumambulate it, and those who stand up for prayer, and those who bow (submit themselves with humility and obedience to Allaah), and make prostration (in prayer, etc.)'

And proclaim to mankind the Hajj (pilgrimage). They will come to you on foot and on every lean camel, they will come from every deep and distant (wide) mountain highway (to perform Hajj)."

[al-Hajj 22:26-27]

As regards the story of the construction of the Ka'bah in the Sunnah, Ibn 'Abbaas (may Allaah be pleased with him) narrated the story of Haajar, the wife of Ibraaheem and the mother of his son Ismaa'eel. In his report, he said: "... Ibraaheem brought her and her son Ismaa'eel, while she was still breast-feeding him, and left them in a place near the Ka'bah (meaning near the place where the Ka'bah was later built) under a tree on the spot of Zamzam (meaning the place where Zamzam later appeared), at the highest place in the mosque. In those days there was no-one in Makkah nor was there any water. So he left them there and placed near them a leather bag containing some dates, and a water-skin containing some water, then he set off for home. Ismaa'eel's mother followed him and said: 'O Ibraaheem, where are you going, leaving us in this valley where there is no person whose company we may enjoy, nor is there anything (to enjoy)?' She said this many times, but he did not look back at her. Then she asked him, 'Has Allaah commanded you to do this?' He said, 'Yes.' She said, 'Then He will not forsake us,' and returned, while Ibraaheem went on his way. When he reached al-Thaaniyah, where they could not see him, he turned to face the Ka'bah, raised his hands and offered the supplication: 'O Our Lord! I have made some of my offspring dwell in an uncultivable valley, by Your Sacred House in order, O Our Lord, that they may perform al-Salaat (iqaamat al-salaat), so fill some hearts among

men with love towards them, and (O Allaah) provide them with fruits so that they may give thanks.' [Ibraaheem 14:37]

Ismaa'eel's mother went on suckling Ismaa'eel and drinking from the water (she had). When the water in the water-skin had all been used up, she became thirsty and her child also became thirsty. She started looking at him tossing in agony; she left him because she could not endure looking at him, and found that the mountain of al-Safaa' was the nearest mountain to her on that land. She stood on it and started looking at the valley keenly so that she might see somebody, but she could not see anybody. Then she descended from al-Safaa' and when she reached the valley, she tucked up her robe and ran in the valley like a person in distress and trouble, till she crossed the valley and reached the mountain of al-Marwa, where she stood and started looking, expecting to see somebody, but she could not see anybody. She repeated that (running between al-Safaa' and al-Marwa) seven times." Ibn 'Abbaas said: "The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: 'This is the origin of the tradition of al-Sa'ee (the walking) of people between them (al-Safaa' and al-Marwa).' When she reached al-Marwa (for the last time), she heard a voice and she made herself quiet and listened attentively. She heard the voice again and said, 'O (whoever you may be)! You have made me hear your voice; have you got something to help me?' And behold! She saw an angel at the place of Zamzam, digging the earth with his heel (or his wing), till water flowed from that place. She started to make something like a basin around it, using her hands in this way, and started filling her water-skin with water from her hands, and the water was flowing out after she had scooped some of it." The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) added: "May Allaah bestow mercy on Ismaa'eel's mother! Had she let the Zamzam (flow without trying to control it) (or had she not scooped from that water) (to fill her water-skin), Zamzam would have been a stream flowing on the surface of the earth." The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) further added: "Then she drank (water) and suckled her child. The angels said to her: 'Don't be afraid of being forsaken, for this is the House of Allaah which will be built by this boy and his father, and Allaah never forsakes His people.' The House at that time was on a high place resembling a hillock, and when torrents came, they flowed to its right and left. She lived in that way until some people from the tribe of Jurhum or a family from Jurhum passed by her and her child, as they (the Jurhum people) were coming through the way of Kadaa'. They stopped and stayed in the lower part of Makkah where they saw a bird that had the habit of flying around water and not leaving it. They said, 'This bird must

be flying around water, although we know that there is no water in this valley.' They sent one or two messengers who discovered the source of water, and returned to inform them about it. So, they all came (towards the water)." The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) added: "Ismaa'eel's mother was sitting near the water. They asked her, 'Do you allow us to stay with you?' She replied, 'Yes, but you will have no right to possess the water.' They agreed to that." The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) further added: "Ismaa'eel's mother was pleased with the whole situation, as she used to love to enjoy the company of the people. So, they settled there, and later on they sent for their families who came and settled with them so that some families became permanent residents there. The child (Ismaa'eel) grew up and learnt Arabic from them, and (his virtues) caused them to love and admire him as he grew up. When he reached the age of puberty, they made him marry a woman from amongst them. After Ismaa'eel's mother had died, Ibraaheem came after Ismaa'eel's marriage in order to see his family that he had left before ... Then Ibraaheem came and saw Ismaa'eel under a tree near Zamzam, sharpening his arrows. When he saw Ibraaheem, he stood up to welcome him and they greeted one another as a father greets his son or a son greets his father. Ibraaheem said, 'O Ismaa'eel, Allaah has given me an order.' Ismaa'eel said: 'Do what your Lord has ordered you to do.' Ibraaheem asked, 'Will you help me?' Ismaa'eel said, 'I will help you.' Ibraaheem said, 'Allaah has ordered me to build a house here,' pointing to a hillock higher than the land surrounding it." The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) added: "Then they raised the foundations of the House (Ka'bah). Ismaa'eel brought the stones and Ibraaheem was building, and when the walls became high, Ismaa'eel brought this stone and put it for Ibraaheem, who stood on it and carried on building, while Ismaa'eel was handing him the stones, and both of them were saying: 'Our Lord! Accept (this service) from us. Verily! You are the All-Hearer, the All-Knower.' [al-Baqarah 2:127]. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) added, "Then both of them went on building and going around the Ka'bah saying, 'Our Lord! Accept (this service) from us. Verily! You are the All-Hearer, the All-Knower.'" (Saheeh al-Bukhaari, 3113)

Having outlined the historical details of the building of the Ka'bah, we move on to the idea mentioned in your question that the name of Allaah was derived from the name of an idol. This is an extremely odd idea. How can the name of the Creator, the Evolver, the First, the Almighty, the Compellor be derived from the name of a created idol that could neither benefit nor harm anyone?

Allaah says, rebuking the mushrikeen (polytheists) (interpretation of the meaning):
"Yet they have taken besides Him other gods that created nothing but are themselves created, and possess neither hurt nor benefit for themselves, and possess no power (of causing) death, nor (of giving) life, nor of raising the dead."
[al-Furqaan 25:3]

"You worship besides Allaah only idols, and you only invent falsehood. Verily, those whom you worship besides Allaah have no power to give you provision, so seek your provision from Allaah (Alone), and worship Him (Alone), and be grateful to Him. To Him (Alone) you will be brought back." [al-'Ankaboot 29:17]

Allaah describes how Ibraaheem (upon whom be peace) rebuked his father and his people for worshipping idols (interpretation of the meaning):
"When he said to his father: 'O my father! Why do you worship that which hears not, sees not and cannot avail you in anything?' [Maryam 19:42]

"And recite to them the story of Ibraaheem, when he said to his father and his people: 'What do you worship?' They said: 'We worship idols, and to them we are ever devoted.' He said, 'Do they hear you, when you call (on them)? Or do they benefit you or do they harm (you)?' They said, 'Nay, but we found our fathers doing so.' He said, 'Do you observe that which you have been worshipping, - you and your ancient fathers? - Verily! They are enemies to me, save the Lord of the 'Aalameen (makind, jinn and everything that exists), Who has created me, and it is He Who guides me.'" [Al-Shu'araa' 26:69-78]

Concerning Ibraaheem's destruction of his people's idols, Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

"Then he turned to their gods and said, 'Will you not eat (of the offering before you)? What is the matter with you that you speak not?' Then he turned upon them, striking (them) with (his) right hand. Then they (the worshippers of idols) came

towards him, hastening. He said, 'Worship you that which you (yourselves) carve? While Allaah has created you and what you make?'" [al-Saaffaat 37:91-96]

After reading all this, how can it be said that Ibraaheem left one idol near the Ka'bah, and that the name of Allaah is derived from the name of an idol? Do you know what "Allaah" means and where this name is derived from?

The blessed name "Allaah" is derived from the Arabic verb *alaha/ya'lahu/ma'looh* [the root of which is the three letters *alif, laam, haa*]. This verb includes the meaning of love as well as worship. Allaah, may He be glorified and exalted, is the One Who is loved, glorified and feared by the believers, and they put their hope in Him.

As regards to your last question, about whether Islam has anything to do with the worship of idols or heavenly bodies, this is a strange matter indeed. Islam proclaimed the absolute unity of Allaah (Tawheed) and taught that He Alone is to be worshipped, with no partners or associates. Islam came to fight idolatry and put an end to it, so how can it possibly be connected to idol-worship?

Perhaps you have read in the Qur'aan the story of the hoopoe who believed only in Allaah; he knew Who his Lord was, and denounced the worship of stars and planets. Allaah says, relating how His Prophet Sulaymaan (upon whom be peace) conveyed the story to the queen of Yemen at that time (interpretation of the meaning):

"[The hoopoe said] '... and I have come to you from Saba' (Sheba) with true news. I found a woman ruling over them, and she has been given all things that could be possessed by any ruler of the earth, and she has a great throne. I found her and her people worshipping the sun instead of Allaah, and Shaytaan has made their deeds fair-seeming to them, and has barred them from (Allaah's) Way, so they have no guidance, so that they do not worship (prostrate before) Allaah, Who brings to light what is hidden in the heavens and the earth, and knows what you conceal and what you reveal. Allaah, none has the right to be worshipped but He, the Lord of the Supreme Throne!" [al-Naml 27:22-26]

There is also the story of how Ibraaheem rebuked his people for worshipping heavenly bodies, the sun and moon, which Allaah has told us in Soorat al-An'aam (the sixth soorah).

The fast of Ramadaan is not connected to the moon because we worship the moon, but because the Lord of the moon has made it a marker of time for us, by which we may organize our worship and other affairs. So we look for the new moon of Ramadaan so that we may worship Allaah Alone by fasting, and we look for the new moon of the following month to mark the end of this annual act of worship. We also look for the timings of Hajj and other acts of worship in a similar way.

We hope that this has helped you understand anything that was not clear to you before. Note that this is a serious issue, and it is not something to be taken lightly. The only religion with Allaah is Islam, which He has chosen for His slaves, and He will not accept any other religion. Come and join the religion of truth, and follow what your Lord has revealed.

It is not permissible to differ from the people of the city with regard to fasting and Eid

In our city there is a group of committed brothers, but they differ from us with regard to some matters, such as fasting in Ramadaan. They do not fast until they see the moon with the naked eye. Sometimes we fast two or three days before them in Ramadaan, and they break their fast one or two days after Eid al-Fitr. Every time we ask them about fasting on the day of Eid they say, “We do not break our fast or start to fast until we see the new moon with the naked eye, because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said, ‘Fast when you see it and break your fast when you see it.’” But they do not recognize the sighting of the moon with instruments as you know. They also differ with regard to the time of Eid prayer, and they do not pray until after Eid according to their sighting. Similarly on Eid al-Adha they differ from us with regard to offering the sacrifice of Eid and the standing at ‘Arafaah. They celebrate two days after Eid al-Adha, i.e., they do not offer the sacrifice until after all the Muslims have offered their sacrifices. Is what they are doing correct? May Allaah reward you with good. Praise be to Allaah.

They should fast with the people and break their fast with the people, and they should offer the Eid prayer with the Muslims in their city because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “Fast when you see it (the new moon) and break your fast when you see it, and if it is cloudy then complete the number (of days – i.e., assume the month is thirty days).” (Agreed upon). What is meant by this command to fast and to break the fast is if the sighting is proven by the naked eye or by means that help the eye to see, because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “Fasting is the day when you (i.e., the Muslim community) fast, iftaar is the day when you (all) break your fast and adha is the day when you (all) offer your sacrifice.” Narrated by Abu Dawood, 2324; al-Tirmidhi, 697; classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in *Saheeh al-Tirmidhi*, 561).

And Allaah is the Source of strength. May Allaah send blessings and peace upon our Prophet Muhammad and upon his family and companions.

Can he break the fast following Saudi when the people of his country are still fasting?

Here in our country we completed the fast of Ramadaan with thirty days, but in Saudi they fasted for twenty-nine days. I was surprised when one of my friends did not fast on the thirtieth day. He said to me that it is haraam to fast on this day because the moon has appeared in Saudi.

My question is: what is the ruling on what my friend did?.
Praise be to Allaah.

If a Muslim is in a country that relies on moonsighting to determine the beginning and end of the month, then he is enjoined to start and end the fast when they do. We have stated that in the answer to question no. [12660](#).

But if the Muslim is in a kaafir land, or in a land where they tinker with the beginning and end of the month according to their whims and desires, and do not pay attention to the moonsighting as prescribed in Islam, then there is no sin on him if he follows those whose moonsighting and adherence to Islamic rulings he trusts. See the answer to question no. [50522](#), where this is explained further.

And Allaah knows best.

Should they follow the European Council even though they use astronomical calculations?

We run an Islamic center in the city in Britain, and we want to establish the dates of the beginning and end of Ramadaan for the people who pray in our center. Our goal is to try to unite the Muslims on this matter, but some of them think that we should sight the moon whilst others think that we may use calculations. The European Fatwa Council has its own view on this matter, please note that it is the body which takes care of issuing fatwas to the Muslims in Europe.

Our question is:

Should we follow the European Fatwa Council even though they use calculations to determine the beginning and end of Ramadaan, or should we continue our efforts to unite the mosques in Our city even though that goes against the view of the Council?

Praise be to Allaah.

It is not permissible to use astronomical calculations to establish the beginning and end of Ramadaan. It is obligatory to sight the moon as the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “Fast when you see it (the moon) and break your fast when you see it.”

Narrated by al-Bukhaari, 1909; Muslim, 1081. See also question no. [1602](#).

The Muslims are agreed that it is not permissible to follow astronomical calculations instead of sighting the new moon if the sky is clear. However if the sky is cloudy then some of the scholars held an odd view and said that it is permissible to follow astronomical calculations, but this applies only to the person doing the calculations.

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah (may Allaah have mercy on him) said:

It is a basic fact of Islam that we must sight the crescent moon with regard to fasting, Hajj, ‘iddah, eelaa’ (period of four months abstention which is required if a man swears an oath that he will not have marital relations with his wife) and other

rulings that are connected to the lunar calendar. There are many texts from the Prophet which indicate that, and the Muslims are unanimously agreed on that. No difference of opinion was known concerning that in the past or in modern times, apart from some fuqaha' after the third century AH, who claimed that if the new moon is covered by clouds it is permissible for an astronomer to follow calculations himself, so that if his calculations indicate that the moon could have been sighted he may fast, otherwise he should not.

This view, even though it is subject to the condition that there be clouds and it applies only to the astronomer, it is an odd view that is outweighed by the consensus on the opposite view. With regard to following calculations when the sky is clear or applying the results of the calculations to the general public, this is something that no Muslim has ever suggested.

Majmoo' al-Fataawa, 25/132.

Based on this, it is not permissible to follow the Council mentioned if they depend on astronomical calculations and not on sighting of the crescent.

So you have to sight the moon as is the command of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) and as is the consensus of the Muslims.

May Allaah help you to do that which He loves and which pleases Him.

And Allaah knows best.

Putting a crescent on top of the minaret of a mosque

Regarding the use of the crescent: 1. Is it sunnah to use the crescent moon as a symbol? (i.e. hadith or Qur'an?) 2. secondarily so, on the top of the Masjid in Bloomington IN (and many MANY others around the world) they use this symbol, BUT I heard from a brother that it was originally a pagan symbol (worship of the moon etc) --- if so should we not all remove this? I am a bit confused and have been unable to find fatwa or hadith. thank you - wa alekium salaam.

Praise be to Allaah.

After consulting with scholars and muftis, we have learned that there is no known basis in Islam for putting a crescent on top of the minaret. Some scholars forbid doing so and consider it to be something that is newly-innovated in the religion. The practice may also contain some element of imitating the kuffaar, especially if it is proven that the crescent is a symbol used by those who worship heavenly bodies. So we should not use this symbol, and the mosque's money should not be spent on something that serves no Islamic purpose. And Allaah knows best.

Were the heavens and the earth created in six days or eight?

I read the verse in which Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):
“Indeed, your Lord is Allaah, Who created the heavens and the earth in Six Days, and then He rose over (Istawa) the Throne (really in a manner that suits His Majesty). He brings the night as a cover over the day, seeking it rapidly, and (He created) the sun, the moon, the stars subjected to His Command. Surely, His is the creation and commandment. Blessed is Allaah, the Lord of the ‘Aalameen (mankind, jinn and all that exists)!”

[al-A’raaf 7:54]

What I understand from this is that Allaah created the heavens and the earth in six days. This is clear.

But in another passage Allaah mentions the creation of the heavens and the earth, and He says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Say (O Muhammad): Do you verily disbelieve in Him Who created the earth in two Days? And you set up rivals (in worship) with Him? That is the Lord of the ‘Aalameen (mankind, jinn and all that exists).

He placed therein (i.e. the earth) firm mountains from above it, and He blessed it, and measured therein its sustenance (for its dwellers) in four Days equal (i.e. all these four ‘days’ were equal in the length of time) for all those who ask (about its creation).

Then He rose over (Istawa) towards the heaven when it was smoke, and said to it and to the earth: ‘Come both of you willingly or unwillingly.’ They both said: ‘We come willingly.’

Then He completed and finished from their creation (as) seven heavens in two Days and He made in each heaven its affair. And We adorned the nearest (lowest) heaven with lamps (stars) to be an adornment as well as to guard (from the devils

by using them as missiles against the devils). Such is the Decree of Him, the All-Mighty, the All-Knower”

[Fussilat 41:9-12]

Here Allaah says that He created the earth in two days, then He placed therein firm mountains and measured therein its sustenance in four days, which makes six days in all. Then He created the heavens in two days, so the total comes to eight days.

How can we reconcile between the two verses?.

Praise be to Allaah.

This is an issue which confuses some people, and some of them think that Allaah created the heavens and the earth in eight days as Allaah says in *Soorah Fussilat* (interpretation of the meaning):

“Say (O Muhammad): Do you verily disbelieve in Him Who created the earth in two Days? And you set up rivals (in worship) with Him? That is the Lord of the ‘Aalameen (mankind, jinn and all that exists).

He placed therein (i.e. the earth) firm mountains from above it, and He blessed it, and measured therein its sustenance (for its dwellers) in four Days equal (i.e. all these four ‘days’ were equal in the length of time) for all those who ask (about its creation).

Then He rose over (Istawa) towards the heaven when it was smoke, and said to it and to the earth: ‘Come both of you willingly or unwillingly.’ They both said: ‘We come willingly.’

Then He completed and finished from their creation (as) seven heavens in two Days and He made in each heaven its affair. And We adorned the nearest (lowest) heaven with lamps (stars) to be an adornment as well as to guard (from the devils by using them as missiles against the devils). Such is the Decree of Him, the All-Mighty, the All-Knower”

[Fussilat 41:9-12]

because this seems to contradict the other verse which says that He created them in six days.

This is a misunderstanding, and the answer to it is as follows:

There is no contradiction between the time period mentioned in these verses and the other verse which says that it was six days.

In these verses – from *Soorah Fussilat* – we see that Allaah is telling us that He “*created the earth in two Days*”.

Then He “*placed therein (i.e. the earth) firm mountains from above it, and He blessed it, and measured therein its sustenance (for its dwellers)*” in four days equal– i.e., in two days that were added to the two days in which He created the earth, so the total is four days. It does not say that the creation of the mountains and the measuring of the sustenance took four days.

Perhaps the confusion which is mentioned in the question stems from this, i.e., from thinking that the four days are added to the two days in which the earth was created, equaling six, and then adding the two days in which the heavens were created (“*Then He completed and finished from their creation (as) seven heavens in two Days*”) – making a total of eight days, not six days. But this confusion can be dispelled by dealing with this mistaken notion. So the earth was created in two days, and the mountains were created and the sustenance measured in two more days which makes a total of four, i.e., this took the other two days. Then the creation of the seven heavens took two days. So the total is six days of the Days of Allaah, may He be glorified and exalted.

The mufasssireen commented on this fact which deals with the mistaken notion. Al-Qurtubi said:

“*in four days*” – this is like someone saying, “I set out from Basra to Baghdad in ten days and to Kufa in fifteen days, i.e., a total time of fifteen days.” (*al-Jaami’ li Ahkaam al-Qur’aan*, vol. 15, p. 343).

Al-Baghawi said: “*in four days*” means the creation of what is in the earth. The measuring of the sustenance was on Tuesday and Wednesday, which along with Sunday and Monday add up to four days. This is like saying “I married a woman yesterday and today I married two” – one of whom is the woman whom he married the day before.

Tafseer al-Baghawi, 7/165

Al-Zajjaaj said: “*in four days*” means two days added to the previous two days.

Al-Kashshaaf, vol. 3, p. 444

These verses – from *Soorah Fussilat* – confirm the other verse, which says that the creation of the heavens and the earth was completed in six days. So there is no contradiction concerning the period in which Allaah created the heavens and the earth. There cannot be any such contradictions in the Qur’aan..

And Allaah knows best.

If he starts fasting with a country that uses calculations, should he break the fast with them?

I am a student studying in the state of Karnataka in India. The Muslims here differ concerning the beginning and end of Ramadan. The state here set the beginning of Ramadan at the beginning of the year, which means that they do not rely on moonsighting. This prompted some of the Muslims, most of whom are Arabs, to ignore them and start Ramadan with Saudi. Is this correct? What should the one who fasts with them do now?.

Praise be to Allaah.

If a Muslim is living in a country which relies on proper shar'i sighting of the moon to establish the beginning and end of the month, then he is enjoined to follow them with regard to starting and ending the fast. This has been explained in the answer to question number 12660. But if the Muslim is living in a kaafir country or in a country where they tamper with the beginning and end of the month according to their whims and desires, and do not pay any attention to proper shar'i sighting of the moon, then he should follow the closest country to him where they pay attention to sighting of the moon. If he fasts with a country whose moon sighting is reliable, like the land of the Two Holy Sanctuaries, there is nothing wrong with that.

Based on that, if India started to fast one day, for example, after the countries that pay attention to sighting the moon, then it may be said to the one who fasted with them: Do not break the fast with India; rather break the fast with the country which pays attention to moon sighting and make up one day to replace the first day of Ramadan.

And Allaah knows best.

They fasted then they went back to their homeland where Ramadaan had not yet begun

My question has to do with whether it is obligatory to fast when there is a difference in moonsighting between two countries. We left Saudi territory after it was proven that the month of Ramadaan had begun, and entered Jordanian territory – where we live – after Zuhr on that day, and it had not been proven that Ramadaan had begun in Jordan. Many travellers did not fast on that day, because they did not know of the shar'i ruling concerning that. What is the ruling? Should they make up the fast for that day? With regard to the travellers who did fast on that day, is their fast valid, and should they complete the fast in Jordan even if the number of days that they fasted turns out to be 31 days?.

Praise be to Allaah.

Firstly:

In the answer to question no. [50487](#) we stated that the sighting of the moon may differ, so each country should fast according to its own sighting and they do not have to start fasting when the moon is sighted in another country.

Secondly:

It seems – and Allaah knows best – that if Ramadaan begins when a person is in one country then he should fast with the people of that country, even if he is travelling on that day to another country where the beginning of the month has not yet been announced. That is because fasting that day became obligatory for him when the month of Ramadaan began when he was in the first country, because Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“So everyone of you who is present during that month should spend it in fasting”

[al-Baqarah 2:185]

This person was present during the month so he has to fast.

With regard to the command to count the number of days of the month, and the difference of opinion as to whether Ramadaan should be completed according to the reckoning of the first country, or according to the reckoning of the country to which he travelled, the basic principle that is mentioned by many of the scholars

concerning this matter is that the one who travels to another country should follow the ruling of the country to which he has come, as it says in *al-Majmoo'* by al-Nawawi (6/274). If the people in the second country complete the fasting as thirty days, he should fast with them, even if that means that he will have fasted thirty-one days. But if they fast for twenty-nine days, there is no problem in that case, because then he will have completed thirty days, and the month may be twenty-nine days or thirty days.

Al-Nawawi (may Allaah have mercy on him) said in *al-Majmoo'* (6/274):

If he started to fast in one country then he travels to a distant country where they did not see the new moon when the people of the first country saw it, and he completes thirty days from the time when he fasted, if we assume that each country has its own ruling, then there are two points of view, the more sound of which is that he has to fast with them because he has now become one of them.

What if he saw the new moon in one country, and celebrated Eid with them, then he travelled by ship to another country and finds the people there fasting?

Shaykh Abu Muhammad said: He has to refrain from eating and drinking for the rest of that day, if we say that each country has its own ruling. End quote.

It says in *Tuhfat al-Muhtaj* (3/383) that Ibn Hajar al-Haytami (may Allaah have mercy on him) said:

If we do not say that the people of the other country have to fast because of the differences in moonsighting, when a person travels there from a land where the moon was sighted, the more correct view is that he should join them in fasting until the end of their month, even if he has already completed thirty days, because by moving to where they are he has become like them. End quote.

It says in *al-Insaaf*, which is a Hanbali book (3/273):

It says in *al-Ri'aayat al-Kubra*: If he travels from a land where the moon was sighted on the night before Friday to a land where it was sighted the night before Saturday, and he has completed a month of fasting but they have not sighted the new moon, he should fast with them. End quote.

We have previously quoted on this site many fatwas from contemporary scholars which affirm this ruling. See the answers to questions no. [38101](#), [45545](#) and [71203](#).

From the above it may be understood that the one who fasted and completed the fast on the first day of Ramadaan did the right thing, because you were in a country where the sighting of the moon had been confirmed for that day, so you were obliged to fast then, even if you entered your own country – where no announcement of Ramadaan had been made – during that day.

Then when you travelled to your country in which the fasting began a day later than in the first country, you should continue fasting with the people there, even if that means that the number of days you fast is thirty-one.

And Allaah knows best.

Was our breaking the fast wrong and do we have to make up the 30th day of Ramadan?

Do we have to make up the 30th day of last Ramadan or offer expiation? I heard that our breaking the fast was wrong and that Ramadan in 1428 AH was 30 days and not 29 days.

Praise be to Allaah.

You do not have to make up the 30th day, because Ramadan was 29 days, based on the fact that the shar'i moon sighting was confirmed and nearly 10 people testified to that, as was mentioned by Shaykh Saalih ibn Muhammad al-Lahaydaan, the head of the Higher Judiciary Council (may Allah preserve him).

If anyone was outside the Kingdom and relied on its moon sighting, then his breaking of the fast is valid and he does not have to do anything further.

And Allah knows best.

If countries differ with regard to when Ramadaan begins and when the day of ‘Arafah is, with whom should I fast?

Because of some personal circumstances we moved to Pakistan, where a lot of things are different, such as the time of prayer, etc. I want to ask you: I am keen to fast on the day of ‘Arafah, but the Hijri date in Pakistan is different from the date in Saudi: when the date in Pakistan is the 8th of the month, it is the 9th in Saudi. Should I fast on the 8th – which is the 9th in Saudi – or should I fast according to the date in Pakistan?.

Praise be to Allaah.

Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymeen (may Allaah have mercy on him) was asked: what if the day of ‘Arafah is different because of the moon being sighted at different times in different countries? Should we fast according to the moon sighting in the country where we are or according to the moon sighting in al-Haramayn (the two Holy Sanctuaries)?

He replied: This is based on a difference of opinion among the scholars: Is there only one moon sighting for the whole world or does it vary according to when the moon rises in different places?

The correct view is that it varies according to when the moon rises in different places. For example, if the moon is sighted in Makkah, and today is the ninth, and it is sighted elsewhere one day before Makkah, and the day of ‘Arafah in Makkah is the tenth for them, it is not permissible for them to fast on this day because it is Eid. Similarly if it so happens that they sight the moon after Makkah, and the 9th in Makkah is the 8th for them, then they should fast the day that is the 9th for them, which is the 10th in Makkah. This is the correct view, because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “When you see it (the new moon) fast and when you see it break your fast.” Those who did not see the moon in their own location have not seen it. Just as people are unanimously agreed that the times for dawn and sunset vary according to their own location, so too the months are also worked out by location, just like the daily timings.

Majmoo’ al-Fataawa, 20.

And he (may Allaah have mercy on him) was asked about some people who worked in the Saudi embassy in a foreign country, who said that they were having a problem concerning the fast of Ramadaan and the fast on the day of ‘Arafah. The brothers there had split into three groups:

One group said: we will fast with Saudi and break the fast with Saudi.

Another group said: we will fast with the country where we are living and break the fast with them.

The last group said: we will fast Ramadaan with the country where we are living, but we will fast the day of ‘Arafah with Saudi.

They asked the Shaykh to provide them with a detailed answer concerning the Ramadaan fast and fasting the day of ‘Arafah, whilst noting that for the past five years, in the country where they were living neither Ramadaan nor the day of ‘Arafah had been observed on the same days as in Saudi; their Ramadaan started one or two days after it had been announced in Saudi, and sometimes three days after.

He replied:

In the name of Allaah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

The scholars (may Allaah have mercy on them) differed concerning the issue when the moon is sighted in one part of the Muslim world and not in another: do all the Muslims have to act on the basis of that, or only those who sighted it and the people who live in the same region, or only those who sighted it and the people who live under the same government? There are many different points of view.

The most correct view is that the matter should be referred to those who have knowledge of it. If the moon rises at the same point for two countries they become like one country, so if it is sighted in one of them that ruling applies to the other. But if the rising points differ, then each country has its own ruling. This is the view favoured by Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah (may Allaah have mercy on him); this is the apparent meaning of the texts of the Qur’aan and Sunnah and what is implied by analogy.

In the Qur’aan it says (interpretation of the meaning):

“So whoever of you sights (the crescent on the first night of) the month (of Ramadan i.e. is present at his home), he must observe Sawm (fasts) that month, and whoever is ill or on a journey, the

same number [of days which one did not observe Sawm (fasts) must be made up] from other days. Allaah intends for you ease, and He does not want to make things difficult for you. (He wants that you) must complete the same number (of days), and that you must magnify Allaah [i.e. to say Takbeer (Allaahu Akbar: Allaah is the Most Great)] for having guided you so that you may be grateful to Him”

[al-Baqarah 2:185]

What is implied by this verse is that whoever does not see it is not obliged to fast.

In the Sunnah, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “When you see it (the new moon) then fast, and when you see it, break your fast.” What is implied by this hadeeth is that if we did not see it we are not obliged to fast or to break the fast.

With regard to analogy, the times for starting and ending the fast each day should be worked out in each country on its own, according to the local times of sunrise and sunset. This is a point on which there is scholarly consensus. So you see the people in east Asia starting their fast before the people of west Asia, and breaking their fast before them, because dawn breaks for the former before the latter, and the sun sets for the former before the latter.

Once this is established with regard to the times for starting and ending the daily fast, it also applies to the start and end of the monthly fast. There is no difference between them.

But if many regions come under the same government, and the ruler gives the command for the fast to start or end, then his command must be followed, because this is a matter of scholarly dispute but the command of the ruler dispels that dispute.

Based on the above, you should fast and break your fast along with the people of the country where you are living, whether that is in accordance with your country of origin or not. Similarly on the day of ‘Arafah you should follow the country where you are living.

Written by Muhammad al-Saalih al-‘Uthaymeen, 28/8/1420 AH.

Majmoo’ al-Fataawa, 19.

Fasting on the day of doubt

On the night of the thirtieth of Sha'ban we went out to sight the crescent, but the weather was cloudy so we could not see it. Should we fast the thirtieth day of Sha'baan, because it is a day concerning which there is some doubt?

Praise be to Allaah.

This is what is called the “day of doubt”, because there is doubt concerning it – is it the last day of Sha'baan or the first day of Ramadaan? Fasting on this day is haraam because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said, “Fast when you see the new moon and break your fast when you see the new moon, and if you are not sure, then complete the number of Sha'baan as thirty days.” (Narrated by al-Bukhaari, 1909).

‘Ammar ibn Yaasir said: “Whoever fasts on the day concerning which there is doubt has disobeyed Abu'l-Qaasim (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him).” This was narrated by al-Tirmidhi and classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in *Saheeh al-Tirmidhi*, 553.

Al-Haafiz ibn Hajar said: “It was understood from this that it is haraam to fast the day of doubt, because the Sahaabah would not say such a thing based on personal opinion, so a report such as this has the same status as a marfoo' hadeeth.

The scholars of the Standing Committee said concerning the day of doubt, “The Sunnah indicates that it is haraam to fast this day.” (*Fataawa al-Lajnah*, 10/117)

Shaykh Muhammad ibn ‘Uthaymeen (may Allaah have mercy on him) said, after mentioning the difference of opinion concerning the ruling on fasting the day of doubt: “The most correct of these views is that it is haraam, but if it is proven to the ruler that it is obligatory to fast this day and he commands the people to fast, then no one should go against his opinion, and that means that no one should show that he is not fasting on that day, rather a person (who has a different opinion) may not fast, but he should do so secretly.”

Al-Sharh al-Mumti', 6/318.

Taking the crescent as a symbol

What is the symbolism behind the Muslim star and crescent? I did a keyword search of your site and searched my library's reference books and cannot find anything more than a reference to the flag of the Ottoman Empire. Thank you for your interest.

Praise be to Allaah.

There is no basis in sharee'ah for taking the crescent or star as a symbol of the Muslims. This was not known at the time of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), or at the time of the Khulafa' al-Raashidoon (the first four leaders of Islam after the death of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), or during the time of the Umawis (Umayyad dynasty). It emerged some time after that, and historians differ as to when this symbol was first adopted and who was the first to adopt it. Some say it was the Persians, others say it was the Greeks, and that this symbol was somehow passed to the Muslims. (See *Al-Taraateeb al-Idaariyah* by al-Kittaani, 1/320). It was said that the reason why the Muslims adopted the crescent was that when they conquered some western countries, the churches there had crosses on top of them, the Muslims replaced the crosses with these crescents, and the practice spread in this way. Whatever the case, symbols and banners must be in accordance with the teachings of Islam, and as there is no evidence that this symbol is prescribed by Islam, it is better not to use it. Neither the crescent nor the star are symbols of the Muslims, even though some Muslims may use them as symbols.

As regards what Muslims think about the moon and the stars, they believe that they are part of the creation of Allaah, and as such can neither benefit nor harm people, and they do not have any influence over events on earth. Allaah has created them for the benefit of mankind, an example of which is seen in the aayah or verse of the Qur'aan (interpretation of the meaning):

"They ask you (O Muhammad) about the new moons. Say: These are signs to mark fixed periods of time for mankind and for the pilgrimage..." [al-Baqarah 2:189]

[The commentator] Ibn Katheer said, explaining the phrase *Say: these are signs to mark fixed periods of time*: "From them (the new moons) they may know the times for repaying loans, the *'iddah* (waiting period) of their women [after being divorced or widowed] and the timing of their Hajj (pilgrimage)... Allaah has made them signs

to mark the times when Muslims should start to fast and break their fast [the beginning and end of Ramadaan], to count the ‘*iddah* of their women and to know the times for repaying loans.” (*Tafseer Ibn Katheer*).

[Another commentator] Al-Qurtubi (may Allaah have mercy on him) said in his commentary on this aayah [verse]: “This explains the wisdom behind the waxing and waning of the moon, which is to avoid any confusion in appointed dates, dealings, oaths, Hajj, ‘*iddah*, fasting, breaking fasts, length of pregnancy, rentals and other matters that concern mankind. Similar to this aayah are others (interpretation of the meanings):

‘And We have appointed the night and the day as two aayaat (signs). Then, We have made dark the sign of the night while We have made the sign of day illuminating, that you may seek bounty from your Lord, and that you may know the number of the years and the reckoning...’ [al-Isra’ 17:12]

‘It is He Who made the sun a shining thing and the moon as a light and measured out its (their) stages, that you might know the number of years and the reckoning...’ [Yoonus 10:5]

Counting the new moons is easier than counting days.” (See *Tafseer al-Qurtubi*).

With regard to the stars, the scholars of Islam say that Allaah created these stars for three reasons: to adorn the heavens, to drive away the devils (*shayaateen*) and as signs for navigation. (*Saheeh al-Bukhaari, Kitaab Bad’ al-Khalq*), as Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“It is He Who has set the stars for you, so that you may guide your course with their help through the darkness of the land and the sea...” [al-An’aam 6:97]

“And indeed We have adorned the nearest heaven with lamps, and We have made such lamps (as) missiles to drive away the shayaateen (devils), and have prepared for them the torment of the blazing Fire.” [al-Mulk 67:5]

Every person who is resident in a country is obliged to start and end the fast with its people

We are from the land of the Two Holy Sanctuaries, and we work in the embassy in one of the Muslim Asian countries (Pakistan). Should we start and end the fast with the Kingdom or with the country in which we are living?.

Praise be to Allaah.

What appears to be the case, based on the shar'i evidence, is that each person who is living in a country should start the fast with its people, because the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: "The start of the fast is the day you start and the end of the fast is the day you end it, and the day of sacrifice is the day you offer your sacrifice." And because it is known in Islam that we are commanded to be united and warned against division and differences, and because moon sightings may differ from one region to another, according to the consensus of the scholars, as Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said. Based on that, the embassy employee in Pakistan who starts fasting with the Pakistanis is closer to the right way than the one who starts his fast with Saudi, because of the distance between the two countries and the difference between moon sightings in them. Undoubtedly when the Muslims begin and end the fast when the moon is sighted or when 30 days of the month have been completed in any Muslim country, then they are closer to the apparent meaning of the shar'i evidence. But if that is not possible, then the closest is what we have mentioned above. And Allah, may He be glorified, is the source of strength. End quote.

Shaykh 'Abd al-'Azeez ibn Baaz (may Allah have mercy on him)

Majmoo' Fataawa wa Maqaalaat Mutanawwi'ah (15/98, 99)

Shaykh Ibn Baaz was also asked: Sighting of the new moon of Ramadan and Shawwaal may be two days later in Pakistan than it is in Saudi. Should they fast with Saudi or with Pakistan?

He replied:

What seems to be the case to us is that you have to fast with the Muslims where you are, for two reasons. The first is that the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah

be upon him) said: “The start of the fast is the day you start and the end of the fast is the day you end it, and the day of sacrifice is the day you offer your sacrifice.” (narrated by Abu Dawood and others with a hasan isnaad), so you and your brothers, so long as you are staying in Pakistan, should fast with them when they fast and break the fast with them when they break the fast, because you are included in these words and because the moon sighting varies from one place to another. Some of the scholars, including Ibn ‘Abbaas (may Allah be pleased with him) were of the view that the people of each land have their own moon sighting.

The other reason is that if you differ from the Muslims where you are with regard to the beginning and end of the fast, that will cause confusion, provoke questions and objections, and stir up disputes and arguments. Islam came to encourage agreement, harmony and cooperation in righteousness and piety, and to encourage people to avoid fighting and arguing, because Allah says (interpretation of the meaning): “*And hold fast, all of you together, to the Rope of Allaah (i.e. this Qur’aan), and be not divided among yourselves*” [Aal ‘Imraan 3:103].

And the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said, when he sent Mu’aadh and Abu Moosa to Yemen: “Give glad tidings and do not put people off, be in harmony and do not differ.” End quote.

Majmoo’ Fataawa wa Maqaalaat Mutanawwi’ah (15/103, 104).

If he travels during Ramadaan to another country that started the fast at a different time, how should he fast?

If a Muslim travels during Ramadaan to another country where they started the fast later or earlier than his country, and he stays in that country until Eid, with which of the two countries should he break his fast?

Praise be to Allaah.

If a man travels from one country to another where the moonsighting was different, the basic principle is that he should start and end the fast according to the country he is in when it is established that the month has ended. But if that means that he has fasted for less than twenty-nine days, then he has to complete the number, because the lunar month cannot be less than twenty-nine days. This principle is based on the words of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him): “When you see it (the new moon) then fast, and when you see it then break the fast,” and “The month is twenty-nine days, so do not fast until you see it, and do not stop fasting until you see it.” And in the hadeeth of Kurayb is says that Umm al-Fadl sent him to Mu’aawiyah in Syria, and Kurayb told Ibn ‘Abbaas (may Allaah be pleased with him) that the people had seen the new moon of Ramadaan on Friday night in Syria. Ibn ‘Abbaas said: “But we saw it on Saturday night, so we will carry on fasting until we complete thirty days or until we see it.” Kurayb said: “Is not the sighting and fasting of Mu’aawiyah sufficient for you?” He said: “No; this is what the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) enjoined upon us.”

There follow some examples which explain this principle:

1 – He moved from a land where the people started fasting on Sunday to a land where the people started fasting on Saturday, and they broke the fast on Sunday after twenty-nine days of fasting. He should break the fast with them but he has to make up one day later on.

2 – He moved from a land where the people started fasting on Sunday to a land where the people started fasting on Monday. They stopped fasting on a Wednesday after thirty days of fasting. He should carry on fasting with them even if that means he does more than thirty days, because he is in a place where the new moon has

not been sighted, so it is not permissible for him to break the fast. This is similar to the situation if he traveled whilst fasting from a place where the sun sets at 6 p.m. to a land where the sun does not set until 7 p.m. – he should not break his fast until the sun sets at 7 p.m., because Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“then complete your Sawm (fast) till the nightfall. And do not have sexual relations with them (your wives) while you are in I’tikaaf (i.e. confining oneself in a mosque for prayers and invocations leaving the worldly activities) in the mosques. These are the limits (set) by Allaah, so approach them not. Thus does Allaah make clear His Ayaat (proofs, evidences, lessons, signs, revelations, verses, laws, legal and illegal things, Allaah’s set limits, orders, etc.) to mankind that they may become Al-Muttaqoon (the pious)”

[al-Baqarah 2:187]

3 – He moved from a land where the people started fasting on Sunday to a land where the people started fasting on Monday, and they stopped fasting on Tuesday after twenty-nine days. He should break the fast with them and their fasting will have been twenty-nine days while his fasting will have been thirty days.

4 – He moved from a land where the people started fasting on Sunday and stopped fasting on Tuesday after thirty days, to a land where the people started fasting on Sunday and stopped fasting on Monday after twenty-nine days. He should break the fast with them, and he does not have to make up one day, because he has completed twenty-nine days.

The evidence that he has to break the fast in the first example is that the new moon has been sighted, and the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said, “When you see it, stop fasting.” The evidence that he has to make up one day is the words of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him): “The month is twenty-nine days,” so it cannot be less than twenty-nine days.

The evidence that he may continue to fast for more than thirty days in the second example is the words of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), “When you see it, then stop fasting.” So ending the fast is connected to the sighting of the moon, and if it is not sighted then that day is Ramadaan in that place, so it is not permissible for him to break the fast.

The ruling in the third and fourth examples is obvious.

This is what we think is the ruling with regard to this issue, and it is based on the most correct view, which is that the ruling varies according to the moonsighting.

As for the view that the ruling does not vary according to the moonsighting, and that when the moon is sighted according to the shar'i conditions in one place, all the people must start or end the fast, this ruling depends on the evidence of the sighting of the moon, but he has to start fasting or stop fasting discreetly so that he does appear to be going against the community. End quote.

Discussion of numerical miracles in the Qur'aan and use of the solar calendar

I read some 'miracles' of the qur'an recently. These included many things such as the 3 stages of embryos, the orbits of planets, etc etc. However, one of them claimed that the word yawm (day) is mentioned 365 times in the qur'an, and the word qamar is mentioned 12 times in the quraan. I forget how many times the word ayyaam is mentioned. However, a friend pointed out that the islamic calender does not have 365 days in it. What does this mean about the islamic calender? That it is wrong? Or that God knew that most of the world would use the Gregorian calender and that this is a sign that it is the correct one?.

Praise be to Allaah.

Firstly:

Many people are infatuated by the different types of miracles in the Qur'aan, including the "numerical miracles". In newspapers and magazines and on the internet they publish lists of words that are repeated a number of times that corresponds to their structure, and words that are repeated the same number of times as their opposites. They also claim that the word yawm (day) is repeated 365 times and the word shahr (month) is repeated 12 times, and they do this with other words too, such as al-malaa'ikah (angels) and al-shayaateen (devils), and al-dunya (this world) and al-aakhirah (the Hereafter), etc.

Many people think that these numbers are true and that this is one of the miracles of the Qur'aan, but they do not distinguish between subtleties and miracles. Writing a book which contains a specific number of certain words is something that anyone can do; what is so miraculous about that? The miracle that appears in the Book of Allaah is not like these subtleties, rather it is far deeper and greater than that. It is the fact that the most eloquent and well-spoken of the Arabs could not produce anything like the Qur'aan, or ten soorahs of it, or even one soorah. It is not like these subtleties that any writer could produce in any book that he writes, or more.

It should be noted that some people have taken this beyond mere statistics. Some of them have used these numbers to foretell when the state of Israel will fall, and others have used them to say when the Day of Judgement will be. One of the latest fabrications against the Book of Allaah is that which they have published saying

that the Qur'aan foretold the explosions in the towers in New York! Based on the number of the verse in al-Tawbah, and the number of the soorah and juz'. All of that is toying with the Book of Allaah which is caused by ignorance of the true nature of the miracle of the Book of Allaah.

Secondly:

By examining the statistics presented by those who have published these numbers, we find that they did not get the numbers of some phrases right, and some of them have been selective in the way they counted the words, and that is so that they might reach the conclusion they want and that they think is in the Book of Allaah.

Shaykh Dr. Khaalid al-Sabt said:

Dr. Ashraf 'Abd al-Razzaaq Qatanah presented a "study of the numerical miracles in the Holy Qur'aan" which he published in a book entitled: "The Qur'aan and the Numerical Miracles, a critical study of the numerical miracles of the Holy Qur'aan." In the conclusion to this book he reviews three other books: (1) *I'jaaz al-Raqm 19* (The miracle of the number 19) by Baasim Jaraar; (2) *al-I'jaaz al-'Adadi fi'l-Qur'aan* (the numerical miracle in the Qur'aan) by 'Abd al-Razzaaq Nawfal; and (3) *al-Mu'jizah* (the miracle) by 'Adnaan al-Rifaa'i. The author reached a conclusion which he describes as follows:

As the result of my study I reached the idea that the "numerical miracle" as presented in these books is not real at all, and these books are based on conditions that are sometimes selective, in order to prove the validity of this view in a way that will make the reader accept these preconceived results referred to above. These selective conditions sometimes lead the author to go against that which is proven according to the consensus of the ummah, such as going against the spelling of the 'Uthmaani Mus-haf, which is not permissible at all; or adopting the spelling of some words which appears in some Mus-hafs and without paying attention to the spellings in other Mus-hafs. It also goes against basic principles of the Arabic language with regard to synonyms and antonyms.

p. 197, Damascus, Manaar li'l-Nashr wa'l-Tawzee', first edition, 1420 AH/1999 CE.

Dr. Fahd al-Roomi said something similar about the selective way in which Dr 'Abd al-Razzaaq Nawfal chose words in order to reach this numerical balance, such as when he said: The word yawm (day) is mentioned 365 times in the Qur'aan, the number of days in a year. In order to prove this he counted the words

“*al-yawm*” and “*yawman*” but he ignored words such as “*yawmukum*” (your day) and “*yawmuhum*” (their day) and *yawma'idhin* (on that day), because if he had done that, he would have got a different number. The same applies to the word *al-isti'aadhah* which refers to seeking refuge from the shaytaan. He says that it is repeated 11 times, but he includes in that the words “*a'oodhu*” (I seek refuge) and “*fasta'idh*” (seek refuge) but not “*udhtu*” (I sought refuge) or “*ya'oodhoona*” (they seek refuge) or “*u'eedhuba*” (I seek refuge for her) or “*ma'aadh Allaah*” (Allaah forbid).

See: *Ittijaahaat al-Tafseer fi'l-Qarn al-Raabi' 'Ashara* (2/699, 700), Beirut, Mu'sasat al-Risaalah, second edition, 1414 AH.

From this well-founded discussion, the answer to the issue of the word “*yawm*” and the number of times it appears in the Qur'aan, which is mentioned in the question, is clear.

Thirdly:

With regard to the count (of time) (*al-hisaab*, mentioned in Yoonus 10:5) that Allaah has mentioned in His holy Book, it is the precise count (of time) that does not differ as the years pass, which is the lunar count (of time).

With regard to the verse (interpretation of the meaning):

“And they stayed in their Cave three hundred years, adding nine”

[*al-Kahf* 18:25],

some of the scholars have stated that the number 300 refers to solar years, and that the number 309 refers to lunar years. This view was refuted by Shaykh Muhammad ibn Saalih al-'Uthaymeen, who explained in his refutation that the count (of time) with Allaah is lunar, not solar.

Shaykh Muhammad ibn Saalih al-'Uthaymeen (may Allaah have mercy on him) said:

“*adding nine*” means that they added nine years to three hundred, so they stayed there for three hundred and nine years. It may be said: Why doesn't it just say three hundred and nine?

The answer is that this is what is meant, but the Qur'aan is the most eloquent of books, and in order for the ends of the verses to match (in Arabic) it says: “*And they stayed in their Cave three hundred (solar) years, adding nine (for lunar years)*”. It is not as

some people think, that the three hundred refers to solar years and the nine was added for lunar years, because we cannot testify that Allaah meant that. Who can testify that this is what Allaah meant? Even if it so happens that three hundred solar years are equal to three hundred and nine lunar years, we cannot testify about Allaah in this way, because the count (of time) with Allaah is one.

What are the signs by which the count (of time) is reckoned with Allaah?

The answer is that they are the new moons; hence we say that the view that “three hundred years” refers to solar years and “adding nine” refers to lunar years, is a weak view.

Firstly: because we cannot testify that Allaah meant this.

Secondly: because the number of months and years with Allaah is based on the new moons. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“It is He Who made the sun to be a shining glory and the moon to be a light (of beauty), and measured out stages for it; that ye might know the number of years and the count (of time)”

[Yoonus 10:5]

“They ask you (O Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) about the new moons. Say: These are signs to mark fixed periods of time for mankind and for the pilgrimage”

[al-Baqarah 2:189]

Tafseer Soorat al-Kahf.

Reckoning time by the moon and the new moons was well known to the Prophets and their peoples, and reckoning time by the sun was only known to the ignorant followers of false religions, but unfortunately many Muslims follow them nowadays.

Dr Khaalid al-Sabt says, in his refutation of those who say that the verse *“The building which they built”* *[al-Tawbah 9:11]* in al-Tawbah refers to the explosions in America:

5 (the fifth point) – These connections are based on the solar calendar, which is a calendar that was inherited from idolatrous nations, and which was of no significance to the Prophets (blessing and peace be upon them). Rather the calendar that counts in sharee’ah is the calendar that is based on the moon and

new moons, which is more precise. This indicates that what was known to the Prophets was the lunar calendar. In the hadeeth of Waathilah ibn al-Asqa' (may Allaah be pleased with him) it says that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "The Suhuf of Ibraaheem were revealed to him on the first night of Ramadaan, and the Tawrat (Torah) was revealed on the sixth of Ramadaan, and the Injeel (Gospel) on the thirteenth of Ramadaan, and the Furqaan (Qur'aan) was revealed on the twenty-fourth of Ramadaan." Narrated by Ahmad (4/107) and by al-Bayhaqi in *al-Sunan* (9/188). Its isnaad is hasan. It was also mentioned by al-Albaani in *al-Sabeehah* (1575). This could not be known unless the calendar was based on the moon and new moons. This is also indicated by the hadeeth which was narrated in *al-Sabeehayn* from Ibn 'Abbaas (may Allaah be pleased with him) who said: When the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) came to Madeenah, he found the Jews fasting on the day of 'Ashoorah'. He said: "What is this?" They said: This is a good day, this is the day on which Allaah saved the Children of Israel from their enemies. So Moosa fasted on that day ... Narrated by al-Bukhaari (2004) and Muslim (1130). And al-Haafiz (may Allaah have mercy on him) stated clearly that they did not base their count (of time) on the sun. See: *al-Fath* (4/291 and 7/323).

Ibn al-Qayyim (may Allaah have mercy on him) said, commenting on the verses "*It is He Who made the sun a shining thing and the moon as a light and measured out for it stages*" [Yoonus 10:5] and "*And the moon, We have measured for it mansions (to traverse) till it returns like the old dried curved date stalk*" [Yaa Seen 36:38, 39]: Hence the lunar calendar was better known among the nations and was less likely to involve errors, and it is more precise than the solar calendar, and all people can follow it easily. Hence Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning): "*and measured out for it stages that you might know the number of years and the reckoning*" [Yoonus 10:5]. But He did not say that about the sun, hence the months of Hajj, fasting, Eid and other Islamic occasions are based on the lunar calendar. This is by the wisdom of Allaah and His mercy, and so as to protect His religion, as the people may all be able to figure out this count of time easily and avoid mistakes, and so that no differences or confusion would happen to the religion as happened to the people of the Book.

End quote from *Miftaah Daar al-Sa'aadah*, p. 538, 539.

It may be understood from the last comment of Ibn al-Qayyim (may Allaah have mercy on him) that the people of the Book used to follow a solar calendar, and this was stated clearly by al-Haafiz Ibn Hajar (may Allaah have mercy on him) in his response after he attributed this view to Ibn al-Qayyim. See *al-Fath* (7/323).

But in fact it played no role in their religion, rather it was introduced after that by the ignorant among them. End quote.

Concerning the things we learn from the verse “*They ask you (O Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) about the new moons...*”, Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymeen (may Allaah have mercy on him) said:

... and we learn that the fixed periods of time for all nations are the fixed periods of time that were established by Allaah for them – which are the new moons – so these are global fixed periods of time, because Allaah says “*fixed periods of time for mankind*”. As for what has happened recently, namely the adoption of the European calendar, there it has no tangible basis and it makes no sense and is not prescribed in sharee’ah. Hence you find that one month has twenty-eight days and some have thirty days and some have thirty one, without any known reason for this discrepancy. Moreover these months have no physical sign that the people can refer to in order to work out time, unlike the lunar months which have a physical sign that is known to everyone. End quote.

Tafseer al-Baqarah (2/371).

Al-Qurtubi said, commenting on the verse “*Verily, the number of months with Allaah is twelve months (in a year), so was it ordained by Allaah on the Day when He created the heavens and the earth*” [al-Tawbah 9:36]: This verse indicates that rulings on acts of worship and other matters must be connected to the months and years that were known to the Arabs, and not those that were used by the Persians, Byzantines or Copts, and they should not be more than twelve months, because they vary in the number of days; some of them being thirty days and some of them being more or less. But the months of the Arabs never exceed thirty days, although some of them may be less; the ones that are less are not any specific months, rather that varies according to variations in the moon’s movement through the sky. End quote. *Tafseer al-Qurtubi* (8/133).

And Allaah knows best.

The reason why Ramadan changes every year in relation to the Gregorian calendar

I hope that you can explain with regard to the Hijri calendar: why does Ramadan come thirteen or fourteen days later than the Gregorian date?

Praise be to Allah.

Firstly:

It is well-known that different nations and peoples use different calendars. There is the solar calendar, the beginning and end of which are based on the movements of the sun; it has 365 days.

And there is the lunar calendar, which is based on the appearance and disappearance of the moon at the beginning and end of the month; it has 354 days.

The solar calendar is similar to the lunar calendar with regard to the number of months, but it differs from it with regard to the number of days. So it is eleven days longer than the lunar calendar.

The Gregorian calendar is based on the solar year, whereas the Hijri calendar is based on the lunar year. It is for this reason that the beginning of Ramadan every year differs in relation to the Gregorian calendar, and as a result of that it moves through the four seasons.

Secondly:

The lunar calendar is the calendar that must be followed, because Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning): *“It is He Who made the sun a shining thing and the moon as a light and measured out its (their) stages, that you might know the number of years and the reckoning”* [Yoonus 10:5].

Ibn Katheer said: From the sun the days are known, and from the phases of the moon the months and years are known.

End quote from *Tafseer Ibn Katheer* (4/248).

The sun defines day and night only; as for the moon, Allah – may He be glorified and exalted – has made it a measure for the months and years, as He says:

(interpretation of the meaning): “... and measured out its (their) stages, that you might know the number of years and the reckoning” [Yoonus 10:5].

And Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning): “*Verily, the number of months with Allah is twelve months (in a year), so was it ordained by Allah on the Day when He created the heavens and the earth; of them four are Sacred, (i.e. the 1st, the 7th, the 11th and the 12th months of the Islamic calendar). That is the right religion, so wrong not yourselves therein*” [at-Tawbah 9:36].

The words “That is the right religion” indicate that this calendar is the correct way that Allah has approved for us, and that anything other than it, that is customarily used by other nations, is not correct, because it is subject to mistakes and confusion.

Al-Qurtubi said: This verse indicates that what is required is to connect the rulings on acts of worship and other matters to the months and years as known to the Arabs, and not the months that the Persians, Romans and Copts follow.

End quote from *al-Jaami‘ li Ahkaam al-Qur’an* (8/133)

Ash-Shawkaani said: This verse states that no attention should be paid to the months used by the Persians, Romans and Copts, some of which they make thirty days long, and others they make more or less than that.

End quote from *Fath al-Qadeer* (2/521).

Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning): “*They ask you (O Muhammad SAW) about the new moons. Say: These are signs to mark fixed periods of time for mankind and for the pilgrimage*” [al-Baqarah 2:189]; i.e., they are signs for the people with regard to entering and exiting ihram [for Hajj]; for beginning and ending the fast; for marriage, divorce and ‘iddah; for dealing, trade and debts; for both their religious and worldly affairs.

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said: Here Allah tells us that they are signs to mark fixed periods of time for mankind. This is general in meaning and applies to all their affairs. Thus Allah has made the new moon signs to mark fixed periods of time with regard to the established rulings of Islam... That includes the fast, Hajj, ‘iddah, and expiatory fasts.

End quote from *Majmoo‘ al-Fataawa* (25/133).

Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymeen (may Allah have mercy on him) said: As for the Western calendar, there is no tangible, rational or religious basis for it. Hence you will find some of the months having twenty-eight days, some having thirty days, and some having thirty-one days, with no known reason for this difference. Moreover, these months have no tangible sign that people may refer to in order to work out times, unlike the lunar calendar which does have a physical sign that is known to everyone.

End quote from *Tafseer al-Baqarah* (2/371)

And Allah knows best.

Is the story that the astronaut Neil Armstrong became Muslim true?

I'm interested regarding NIL AMSTRONG. we know he had embraced islam. is he alive ? if so, pls reply about him.

Some of my friends don't believe regarding his embracing islam.
Praise be to Allaah.

The story about Neil Armstrong, who they say was the first man to step onto the surface of the moon, becoming a Muslim is one of the stories that are passed around among people. We have researched this story and we did not find any reliable source for it.

We have got used to hearing stories like that which then turn out to be false, and it seems that this is a deliberate attempt to shake the faith of the ordinary Muslims, especially since they fabricated this story with some exciting details, that seem to affirm the superiority of this religion over all other religions. So they spread the news that famous people, such as artists, sportsmen and others have become Muslim, and they quote something with the story that affirms the truth of the Messenger and his message, then after a while they hasten to disprove these stories. Perhaps the story about Armstrong becoming a Muslim is of this type, because he is one of the most famous people in the world. Moreover the reason why he supposedly became Muslim – as they say – is that he heard the adhaan (call to prayer) on the Moon then he heard it again in Egypt.

If the story of such a famous person becoming Muslim was really true, you would see him calling people to Islam and you would see the scholars and daa'iyahs and the Islamic media meeting him and talking to him, none of which happened in this case. If you compare the story of Armstrong supposedly becoming Muslim with the story of Yusuf Islam (the former Cat Stevens, the famous British singer), you will see the difference between lies and truth, imagination and reality.

Yusuf Islam is one of the most famous of those who have really converted to Islam, so you see his picture in the Islamic media and he has his schools in Britain, and he travels in the Muslim world and performs Hajj and 'Umrah. What has Neil Armstrong done of such things, even though he is far more famous?

Whatever the case, we do not need to hear the adhaan on the Moon in order to prove that our religion is true. If this man or anyone else becomes Muslim, he is the one who will benefit from that, and if he goes astray and disbelieves, then he is the one who will be harmed by that.

We remind you of the words of Allaah (interpretation of the meaning):

“Say: O you mankind! Now truth (i.e. the Qur’aan and Prophet Muhammad), has come to you from your Lord. So whosoever receives guidance, he does so for the good of his own self; and whosoever goes astray, he does so to his own loss; and I am not (set) over you as a Wakeel (disposer of affairs to oblige you for guidance)”

[Yoonus 10:108]

“Verily, We have sent down to you (O Muhammad) the Book (this Qur’aan) for mankind in truth. So whosoever accepts the guidance, it is only for his ownself; and whosoever goes astray, he goes astray only for his (own) loss. And you (O Muhammad) are not a Wakeel (trustee or disposer of affairs, or guardian) over them”

[al-Zumar 39:41]

And Allaah knows best what the truth of the matter is. May Allaah send blessings on our Prophet Muhammad.

The eclipse prayer is prescribed when one sees an eclipse, not when one hears news of an eclipse from the astronomers

Should we offer the eclipse prayer (salaat al-kusoof) based on the announcements of astronomers published in the newspaper? If the eclipse takes place in another country should we pray the eclipse prayer or is it necessary to see the eclipse with the naked eye?

Praise be to Allaah.

There are saheeh ahaadeeth according to which the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) enjoined offering the eclipse prayer and reciting dhikr and du'aa's when the Muslims see an eclipse of the sun or the moon. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "The sun and the moon are two of the signs of Allaah and they do not become eclipsed for the death or birth of anyone. But Allaah sends them to make His slaves fear (Him), so if you see that, then pray and make du'aa' until it is over." According to another version he said: "So if you see that, then hasten to remember Allaah and call upon Him and seek His forgiveness." So he (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) connected the command to pray, make du'aa', remember Allaah and pray for forgiveness to actual sighting of the eclipse and not to the reports of the astronomers.

What all the Muslims must do is adhere to the Sunnah and act in accordance with it, and to beware of everything that is contrary to it.

Hence we know that those who offer the eclipse prayer on the basis of astronomers' reports are making a mistake and going against the Sunnah.

It should also be noted that it is not prescribed for the people who live in a country where the eclipse is not happening to offer the prayer, because the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) connected the command to pray etc to actual sighting of the eclipse, not to news from astronomers that an eclipse was going to happen, or to its happening in another country. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

"And whatsoever the Messenger (Muhammad) gives you, take it; and whatsoever he forbids you, abstain (from it)"

[al-Hashr 59:7]

“Indeed in the Messenger of Allaah (Muhammad) you have a good example to follow”

[al-Ahzaab 33:21]

When the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) offered the eclipse prayer, when that happened in Madeenah and the people saw it, Allaah said (interpretation of the meaning):

“And let those who oppose the Messenger’s (Muhammad’s) commandment (i.e. his Sunnah legal ways, orders, acts of worship, statements) (among the sects) beware, lest some Fitnah (disbelief, trials, afflictions, earthquakes, killing, overpowered by a tyrant) should befall them or a painful torment be inflicted on them”

[al-Noor 24:63]

It is known that he was the most knowledgeable and most sincere of people, and that he was the one who conveyed the rulings from Allaah. If it was prescribed to offer the eclipse prayer on the basis of astronomers’ reports, or when an eclipse occurs in another region that is only seen by the local inhabitants, then he would have said so and would have guided his ummah to do that. Since he did not say that, rather he said the opposite, and he told his ummah to base their actions on actual sighting of the eclipse, we know from that that this prayer is only prescribed for those who see the eclipse and in whose land it occurs. And Allaah is the Source of strength.

Kitaab Majmoo’ Fataawa wa Maqaalaat Mutanawwi’ah li Samaahat al-Shaykh ‘Abd al-‘Azeez ibn ‘Abd-Allaah ibn Baaz , 13/30.

The Muslims are required by sharee'ah to be united in starting and ending the fast – and how that may be achieved

Why are the Muslims not united with regard to the beginning and end of Ramadaan? How can that be achieved?

Praise be to Allaah.

Undoubtedly for the Muslims to be united in starting and ending the fast is something desirable and it is something that is required by sharee'ah wherever possible, and there are only two conditions of achieving that:

1 –All Muslim scholars should do away with relying on calculations as the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) and the early generations of this ummah did, and follow moonsighting or completing the number of days (in the month) as was explained by the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) in the saheeh ahaadeeth. Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah (may Allaah have mercy on him) said in *al-Fataawa* (25/132, 133) that the scholars were unanimously agreed that it is not permissible to rely on calculations for proving the beginning and end of the fast and so on. Al-Haafiz narrated in *al-Fath* (4/127) that al-Baaji said: The consensus of the salaf is that calculations should not be relied on, and their consensus is proof for those who come after them.

2 – They should commit to following the sighting of the moon in any Muslim state that follows the sharee'ah of Allaah and adheres to its rulings. When it is proven in that country that the new moon has been sighted with shar'i proof, with regard to the beginning or end of the fast, then they should follow that, in accordance with the words of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him): “Fast when you see it, and stop fasting when you see it, and if it is too cloudy then complete the number (of days)” and “We are an unlettered nation, we do not write or calculate. The month is such-and-such” and he gestured with his hands three times, and held down his thumb the third time, then he said, “or the month is such-and-such” and he gestured with all of his fingers, meaning that the month may be twenty-nine days or it may be thirty. There are many ahaadeeth with similar meanings, from Ibn 'Umar, Abu Hurayrah, Hudhayfah ibn al-Yamaan and others (may Allaah be pleased with them). It is well known that what the Prophet (peace

and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said was not addressed only to the people of Madeenah, rather it is addressed to the entire ummah at all times and in all places until the Day of Resurrection. When these two conditions are met, then all Muslim countries will be able to fast together and break the fast together, and we ask Allaah to enable them to do that and to help them to rule by Islamic sharee'ah and reject that which goes against it. Undoubtedly that is obligatory upon them because Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“But no, by your Lord, they can have no Faith, until they make you (O Muhammad ﷺ) judge in all disputes between them, and find in themselves no resistance against your decisions, and accept (them) with full submission”

[al-Nisa' 4:65]

And there are similar verses.

There is also no doubt that ruling all their affairs in accordance with sharee'ah is in their best interests and will unite them and help them against their enemies and help them to attain happiness in this world and in the Hereafter. We ask Allaah to open their hearts to that and to help them to achieve it, for He is All-hearing, Ever-near. End quote.

Shaykh 'Abd al-'Azeez ibn Baaz (may Allaah have mercy on him).

How to work out the months for ‘iddah following death or divorce, or fasting for expiation

My mother is in ‘iddah and it so happens that the three months following my father's death contained only 29 days and the fourth month was complete, i.e., thirty days. Should she add 10 days only, so that it will be four months and 10 days, or should she add 13 days, including three days to make up the shorter months?.

Praise be to Allaah.

The ‘iddah for a woman whose husband has died is four months and 10 days, because Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And those of you who die and leave wives behind them, they (the wives) shall wait (as regards their marriage) for four months and ten days, then when they have fulfilled their term”

[*al-Baqarah* 2:234]

This period begins when the husband dies and ends when that period ends.

Ibn Qudaamah (may Allaah have mercy on him) said in *al-Mughni* (8/93):

The scholars are unanimously agreed that the ‘iddah of a free Muslim women who is not pregnant lasts for four months and 10 days from the death of her husband, regardless of whether the marriage was consummated with her or not, whether she was an adult or a minor, because Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And those of you who die and leave wives behind them, they (the wives) shall wait (as regards their marriage) for four months and ten days, then when they have fulfilled their term”

[*al-Baqarah* 2:234].

And the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allaah be upon him) said: “It is not permissible for a woman who believes in Allaah and the Last Day to mourn for anyone who dies for more than three days, except for a husband, four months and 10 days.” Agreed upon.

She should count the Arabic, lunar months and not the days, according to the opinion of the majority of fuqaha’, whether the month is complete or not. When

she has completed four months, she should add 10 days of the fifth month, and thus she will have completed her 'iddah.

This applies if the death occurs on the first of the month. If he dies during the month, then she should count the rest of the first month and three months with their new moons -- whether the months are complete or not -- and 10 days. With regard to what she missed of the first month, she may count it in two ways according to the scholars:

1. She may regard the month as 30 days, whether it turned out to be complete (30 days) or incomplete (29 days);
2. She may count as 'iddah the same amount of time in the fifth month as she missed in the first month. If the first month turned out to be complete, then she should count the number of days to complete 30 days, and if it turns out to be incomplete, then she should count the number of days to complete 29 days.

See: *al-Mughni*, 8/85; *Kashshaaf al-Qinaa'*, 5/418; *al-Mawsoo'ah al-Fiqhiyyah*, 29/315

The second view was favoured by Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah, and was regarded as more correct by our contemporary scholar Shaykh Ibn 'Uthaymeen (may Allaah have mercy on him).

Shaykh Ibn 'Uthaymeen said with regard to one who fasts for two consecutive months starting from the 15th of Jumaada al-Oola, and both Jumaada al-Oola and Jumaada al-Awwal have 29 days, that he should end his fast by fasting on the 15th of Rajab, according to the view that he should complete the first month as 30 days.

But according to the more correct opinion, the two months are reckoned according to the new moons, so he should end his fast by fasting the 14th day of Rajab.

Al-Sharh al-Mumti', 6/413, 414

Similarly, Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah (may Allaah have mercy on him) said that there is no need for us to count the number of days, rather we should look at the day when he began in the first month, and the end will be the same day in the other month. End quote from *Majmoo' al-Fataawa*, 25/144.

An example of that in the case of death: if a man dies on the 12th of Muharram, his wife should observe 'iddah until the 12th of Jumaada al-Awwal. This is four

months, regardless of whether they are complete or not. Then she should add 10 days, so her 'iddah ends on the 22nd of Jumaada al-ااAwwal at the time when her husband died.

Based on that, all your mother has to do is add 10 days only, and she does not have to complete the incomplete months to make them 30 days.

What we have said here about the 'iddah following the husband's death also applies to the one who fasts two consecutive months, and it also applies to the 'iddah of divorce if it is counted in months, which is the case with regard to a divorced woman who is a minor or a woman past the age of bearing children who does not menstruate.

And Allaah knows best.

According to Islamic custom, the night belongs to the day that follows it

My father died two days ago, may Allah have mercy on him. I want to know which are the surahs concerning which it is narrated that they will benefit the deceased in his grave and protect him from punishment. He died at 1 o'clock on Saturday morning. Is this regarded as Friday night, i.e., before dawn, because the period before dawn is called "the last third of the night"? Or is Friday night the end of Thursday? This matter also always confuses me with regard to Laylat al-Qadr in Ramadan. Every year I get confused: is Laylat al-Qadr the night after its signs appear in the morning? The hadeeth mentions the signs of Laylat al-Qadr and speaks of its morning – does its morning mean after Laylat al-Qadr has ended and morning comes with these signs so that we know that Laylat al-Qadr has ended, or is it a signal that that night is today, and that its morning is before Laylat al-Qadr? Praise be to Allah.

Firstly:

There is no report in the Prophet's Sunnah to suggest that there are specific surahs or verses or adhkaar which, if the living recite them over the dead, they will have any effect such as making the deceased steadfast when he is questioned in al-barzakh, or that they will protect the deceased from the punishment of the grave. That which benefits the deceased most at that time, of actions on the part of the living, is their offering supplication (du'aa') for him and praying for forgiveness for him.

There are a number of answers on our website which highlight the weakness of all the reports that have been narrated about the virtue of reciting Surah Yaa-Seen in particular. Some people believe that this surah has a particular effect in making things easier for the deceased in his grave, and they recite it over the grave after the burial, even though there is no proven report to support that in the Prophet's Sunnah. Please see the following answers: [6460](#), [82800](#), [75894](#) and [72201](#)

Secondly:

According to Arab custom and Islamic teaching, the night belongs to the day that comes after it, not the day that comes before it. There is a great deal of evidence to

support that, but the clearest evidence is what the people say on occasions of worship, such as the following:

-1-

Sighting the new moon of Ramadan, which indicates that the blessed month has begun. It may be noted that this night is regarded as part of Ramadan and the people pray Taraweeh on that night.

-2-

Sighting the new moon of Eid al-Fitr, which indicates that Ramadan has ended and the month of Shawwaal has begun. On that night the Muslims stop praying Taraweeh.

When an Islamic text mentions the night of Friday, or the night of Eid, and so on, what is meant is the night according to the Islamic custom mentioned above.

The same applies with regard to Laylat al-Qadr. There is a saheeh hadeeth which clearly indicates that the morning belongs to the night that comes before it. This is the hadeeth of Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri (may Allah be pleased with him) according to which the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) used to observe i'tikaaf during the middle ten days of Ramadan. He observed i'tikaaf one year then, on the night of the twenty-first – which was the night on the morning of which he would come out of his i'tikaaf – he said: 'Whoever was observing i'tikaaf with me, let him observe i'tikaaf for the last ten days, for I was shown this night (Laylat al-Qadr), then I was caused to forget it. I saw myself prostrating in water and mud on the following morning (lit. on its morning). So seek it in the last ten days, and seek it on every odd-numbered night.' It rained that night, and the mosque was covered with palm branches and the mosque leaked, and my own eyes saw the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) with marks of water and mud on his forehead on the morning of the twenty-first.

Narrated by al-Bukhaari (2027) and Muslim (1167)

Think about the words "the night on the morning of which he would come out" and "on the morning of the twenty first" – this indicates that the morning belongs to the night that has just passed.

Imam al-Qurtubi (may Allah have mercy on him) said, in his commentary on the verse in which Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning): "*And*

We appointed for Moosa (Moses) thirty nights and added (to the period) ten (more), and he completed the term, appointed by his Lord, of forty nights [al-A 'raaf 7:142]:

The verse also indicates that the date starts with the night, not the day, because Allah, may He be exalted, says "thirty nights". That is because the night is the beginning of the month. This is also how the Sahaabah (may Allah be pleased with them) spoke of days. It was narrated from them that they used to say: We fasted five with the Messenger of Allah. But the non-Arabs did it differently and based their counting on days, because their calendar was solar.

End quote from *al-Jaami' li Ahkaam al-Qur'an* (7/267)

Thirdly:

Thus it is clear that if a person dies at 1 a.m. on Saturday, then according to Islamic custom he died on "the night of Saturday" and not on "Friday night." So he is not included in the marfoo' hadeeth of 'Abdullah ibn 'Amr ibn 'Aas, "There is no Muslim who dies on the day of Friday or the night of Friday but Allah will protect him from the trial of the grave."

Narrated by at-Tirmidhi (1074); classed as hasan by al-Albaani in *Saheeh at-Tirmidhi*

However it should be noted that there is a difference of opinion among the scholars of hadeeth as to whether this hadeeth is saheeh or da'eef. The majority are of the view that it is da'eef.

For more information on its isnaad, please see the following link:

http://www.alukah.net/publications_Competitions/1008/38

And Allah knows best.

One of the greater portents of the Hour: the sun rising from the place of setting?

In North Pole and South Pole sun never sets for six month and never rises for six months. The sun rises from east and when it reaches the west it does not set but it rises again, this process continues for six months. Now two questions arise out of this scenario A. How does one pray Magrib and Isha Saalat? B. How can we explain/understand the hadeeth that says ‘sun will rise from west before judgment day’?.

Praise be to Allaah.

The sun is one of the signs of Allaah, for which He has created a course in which it runs, and a system from which it does not change. It rises in the east every day, but when Allaah gives permission for the world to end and the Hour to begin, He will command it to rise from the west. At that time all people will believe and will be certain of the resurrection, but their faith will not avail them anything at that moment, except for those who believed before.

Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“The day that some of the Signs of your Lord do come, no good will it do to a person to believe then, if he believed not before, nor earned good (by performing deeds of righteousness) through his Faith”

[al-An’aam 6:158]

al-Bukhaari (4635) and Muslim (157) narrated that Abu Hurayrah (may Allaah be pleased with him) said: The Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “The Hour will not begin until the sun rises from its place of setting. When it rises from its place of setting, all people will believe, but on that day ‘no good will it do to a person to believe then, if he believed not before,’ *[al-An’aam 6:158].”*

Allaah says, describing the movement of the sun and its submission to the command of Allaah (interpretation of the meaning):

“And the sun runs on its fixed course for a term (appointed). That is the Decree of the All-Mighty, the All-Knowing”

[*Ya-Seen 36:38*]

This is explained in the Sunnah. Al-Bukhaari (3199) narrated that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said to Abu Dharr, when the sun set: “Do you know where it goes?” He said: Allaah and His Messenger know best. He said: “It goes and prostrates beneath the Throne, and it asks for permission, and permission is given to it. But soon it will prostrate and it will not be accepted from it, and it will ask for permission and permission will not be given to it, and it will be said to it: ‘Go back from where you came.’ So it will rise from its place of setting, and that is what Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning): “*And the sun runs on its fixed course for a term (appointed). That is the Decree of the All-Mighty, the All-Knowing.*”

Al-Tahhaawi (may Allaah have mercy on him) said in his well known book *al-Aqeedah*: We believe in the portents of the Hour, the emergence of the Dajjaal, the descent of ‘Eesa ibn Maryam (peace be upon him) from heaven, and we believe that the sun will rise from the west. End quote.

Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymeen (may Allaah have mercy on him) said: Similarly, the sun and moon travel in their orbits along the courses decreed for them until an appointed time, until Allaah will give permission for this universe to be destroyed. Then the sun will emerge from its place of setting as is narrated in *Saheeh al-Bukhaari* from Abu Dharr. Then he quoted the hadeeth mentioned above.

This hadeeth clearly indicates that the sun travels by itself, as is also indicated by the verses in which Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And the sun runs on its fixed course”

[*Ya-Seen 36:38*]

“Each running (on a fixed course) for an appointed term”

[*al-Zumar 39:5*]

“each in an orbit floating”

[*al-Anbiya’ 21:33*]

This evidence proves false the idea that the sun is fixed and does not move, and indicates that this is a false notion which should be refuted. End quote from *Majmoo’ Fataawa wa Rasaa’il al-Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymeen* (6/195).

Conclusion: one of the signs of the onset of the Hour is that the sun will rise from the west instead of rising from the east. When that happens, it will indicate that the onset of the Hour is very close, and at that time belief will not benefit the kaafir at all.

And Allaah knows best.

Why do we count the age of Islam from the beginning of the Hijrah and not from the beginning of the revelation and the call?

I hope insha allah this question reaches u in good health. My question is I have noticed when a non muslim asks about the age islam after prophet hood we as Muslims answer only with the years after hijrah, my question is why do we always leave out the first 13 years of prophet hood before hijrah. I know the year of Hijrah was a great year yet we all know that prophet hood started 13 years before this so when answering why dont we mention this like now we are 1433 AH yet when answering why dont we say islam after prophet hood is 1446 adding the 13 years before the period. insha allah you can explain why we dont add the first 13 years into our answer.

Praise be to Allaah.

No doubt the years that the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) spent in Makkah before the Hijrah (migration to Madinah), when he was calling people to the path of his Lord, enduring persecution and patiently putting up with the annoyance and accusations of the foolish, could be part of the age of Islam; indeed they are among the greatest years of Islam because during this time the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) was relying completely upon his Lord, thinking positively of Him, and patiently bearing persecution for His sake.

This is something that no wise person would doubt and no one would deny it at all, whether he is Muslim or otherwise.

But the reason why the people adopted the Hijri calendar as a means of defining the year in which a particular event took place, which is something that people need to do, is that this date is the one that the Sahaabah unanimously agreed to take as the beginning of their calendar. This decision was made at the time of ‘Umar ibn al-Khattaab (may Allah be pleased with him), because it is the actual date of the founding of the Islamic state, when the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) and migrated and settled in Madinah, and the people gathered around him and supported him, and he built the mosque, and other events that followed the Hijrah. So the features of the Islamic state began to develop and it

took on a clear form geographically, socially, militarily and politically. Before that the Muslims did not have a state or any political system to unite them.

The Sahaabah (may Allah be pleased with them) reached a unanimous decision in 16 AH – or, it was said, 17 AH or 18 AH – during ‘Umar’s caliphate, to make the Islamic calendar begin with the year in which the Hijrah occurred. That was because a case was referred to Ameer al-Mu’mineen ‘Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) concerning a contract that one man had with another, saying that what he owed him became due in Sha‘baan.

‘Umar said; Which Sha‘baan? The Sha‘baan of this year we are in now or of last year or of next year? Then he summoned the Sahaabah and consulted them about adopting a calendar from which they could determine when debts became due and the like.

Someone suggested adopting the Persian calendar, but he did not like that. Someone else suggested adopting the Byzantine calendar, but he did not like that. Others suggested dating it from the birth of the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him), or from the beginning of his mission, or from his migration (Hijrah) or from his death.

‘Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) was inclined to choose the date of the Hijrah because it is known when it occurred, and they agreed with him.

The point is that they made the beginning of the Islamic calendar the year of the Hijrah, and they made the first month of the Islamic year Muharram, as was narrated from them. This is the view of the majority of imams, so that people could conduct their business on that basis, with no confusion.

See: *al-Bidaayah wa’n-Nihaayah*, 3/251-253

Al-Bukhaari narrated in his *Saheeh* (3934) that Sahl ibn Sa‘d said: They did not start the calendar from the beginning of the Prophet’s mission or from his death; they only started it from the time of his arrival in Madinah.

Al-Haafiz Ibn Hajar (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

The incidents that are connected to the life of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) and that could have been taken as the start of the calendar are four: his birth, the start of his mission, his migration (Hijrah) and his death. They thought it was best to start the calendar from the Hijrah, because in the case of his birth and the start of his mission, there would be uncertainty with regard to the

exact year. As for the time of his death, they chose not to use it because remembering it would renew their grief. So there was no choice left except the Hijrah. And they chose to regard Muharram as the first month of the year rather than Rabee‘ al-Awwal because the plan to migrate started to take shape in Muharram. The oath of allegiance (bay‘ah) – that was the precursor to the Hijrah – had taken place during Dhu‘l-Hijjah, and the first new moon after the oath of allegiance and the decision to migrate was that of Muharram. So it was appropriate to make it the first month of the year. This is the best explanation I have come across as to why the year starts with Muharram.

Al-Haakim narrated that Sa‘eed ibn al-Musayyab said: ‘Umar assembled the people and asked them what the first day of the calendar should be. ‘Ali said: (It should start) from the day when the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) migrated and left the land of shirk. So ‘Umar did that. End quote.

The one who says that the age of Islam started with the Hijrah is referring to the calendar and what the people agreed upon of creating a system so that people could know the dates of events and define the times of contracts, the dates of visits by delegations, and the like. This is something on which the people agreed during the caliphate of ‘Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) and it has remained so up until the present day. The start of this calendar marks, as ‘Umar intended, the establishment of the (Islamic) state, which only began with the Hijrah.

As for the beginning of Islam itself and people’s awareness of it, we do not need to point out that this took place before that time. Indeed the meaning of the word Islam in general includes the religion that Allah approved for His slaves and with which He sent His Prophets and Messengers. But this is not what we are discussing here.

We do not believe that anyone could imagine that Islam only began with the Hijrah and ignore the years of da‘wah during which the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) and those who were with him in Makkah strove to establish the faith. No one would say this.

And Allah knows best.

The “miracles of nature” that are widely spoken of nowadays

Recently on websites and in chat rooms it has become common to see topics and posts that contain pictures and audio or video clips that show miracles, such as a fountain coming out of the sand in the desert, or the name of Allah on the skin of a goat, or clouds forming the name of Allah, or a girl who was transformed into an animal. Most of these things are not true and are fabricated but these things are very widespread.

What is the ruling on such things?.

Praise be to Allaah.

The signs of Allah in this universe are many; every atom in it testifies to His greatness and majesty, and affirms His Oneness.

Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

“HaMeem. (These letters are one of the miracles of the Quran and none but Allah (Alone) knows their meanings).

The revelation of the Book (this Quran) is from Allah, the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.

Verily, in the heavens and the earth are signs for the believers.

And in your creation, and what He scattered (through the earth) of moving (living) creatures are signs for people who have Faith with certainty.

And in the alternation of night and day, and the provision (rain) that Allah sends down from the sky, and revives therewith the earth after its death, and in the turning about of the winds (i.e. sometimes towards the east or north, and sometimes towards the south or west etc., sometimes bringing glad tidings of rain etc., and sometimes bringing the torment), are signs for a people who understand.

These are the Ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, revelations, etc.) of Allah, which We recite to you (O Muhammad SAW) with truth. Then in which speech after Allah and His Ayat will they believe?”

[al-Jaathiyah 45:1-6] .

This is a call to ponder and think about dozens of verses in the Holy Qur'an that encourage us to look at the visible signs and to think about them so as to increase in faith and certainty about the Creator and believe in His Oneness, may He be glorified.

What these signs have in common is that they are visible to all people. The earth, the sky, the sun, the moon, the animals, rain, one's own self and so on are all signs that may be seen and known by all humans. Each and every individual can understand their greatness and realise that they point to the Lord and Creator. Even though the scientist may know things that ordinary people do not know about these things, they are visible to all and each person may learn from them according to his own level of understanding.

But with regard to what has become widespread nowadays of talking about "miracles of nature", including those mentioned by the questioner, as far as Allah's power is concerned, Allah, may He be exalted, has power over all things, such as causing His name to appear on the skin of a goat or on an egg, or transforming some people into animals.

In fact we believe that such transformations will happen, as the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) told us. At-Tirmidhi (2212) narrated that the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: "Among this ummah, people will be swallowed up in the earth, transformed into monkeys and pigs, and pelted with stones." A man among the Muslims said, "O Messenger of Allaah, when will that be?" He said: "When singing-girls and musical instruments become widespread and wine is drunk."

Classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in *Saheeh at-Tirmidhi*.

This is as far as the might and power of Allah, may He be exalted, are concerned. But as for whether these "miracles" happened or not, most of what is in circulation nowadays of such things cannot be verified or proven. Most of what people are passing around to one another of these things is no more than chit-chat in their gatherings and images on discussion boards and in chat rooms, the source or author of which is not known. Does the Muslim need such stories to prove the soundness of his religion and belief?!

Is there a shortage of evidence based on common sense and certainty, so that one has to resort to these rumours?!

The correct attitude towards these reports is to refrain from judgement. So we do not believe them, because of the possibility that they may be false, and we do not disbelieve them, because of the possibility that they may be true, so long as we have no clear evidence to prove whether they are true or false. If such evidence comes along then we may be certain in that case.

The wise Muslim – who is aware of the guidelines on verifying news and drawing conclusions from it – should not hasten to believe in them, let alone spread them and call people to glorify Allah in amazement.

But what has happened is the opposite of that; many people believed in these “stories” and they started spreading them and talking about them in their gatherings, and passing them around on their mobile phones and in e-mails, then suddenly a few days later they are surprised when it turns out that it was a fabrication spread by some of those who are zealous for Islam – in ignorance and naivety – or by some hateful heretics – in mockery and scorn. This has caused confusion for many people. And Allah is the One Whose help we seek.

What we object to is hastening to believe these things and regarding them as miracles and challenges, telling everybody about them, and making such stories a phenomenon without end. Every day there is a new story; the matter has reached such a level of foolishness that no one of sound mind could believe in these things. We see that in the story of the lion’s roar in which some people – by a huge stretch of the imagination – hear the name of Allah. Much worse than that is what is happening in one country where people have started to touch a tree on the trunk of which the name of Allah appeared, seeking barakah (blessing) and healing from it. Then upon investigation it turns out that it had been carved by someone who wanted to mislead the people.

The Muslims should refrain from propagating such rumours that may cause people to go astray.

We ask Allah to help us understand our religion.

And Allah knows best.

Is the [Arabic] phrase, “Let us put our hand in the hand of time” permissible? And the ruling on inveighing against time.

“Let us put our hand in the hand of time” – is this phrase regarded as haraam, seeing that Allaah is Time?.

Praise be to Allaah.

Firstly:

It is essential to understand correctly the sentence “Allaah is Time”, because misunderstanding it leads to misunderstanding the phrase mentioned in this question. Hence we say:

It is proven in the saheeh Sunnah that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “Do not inveigh against time, for Allaah is Time.” Agreed upon.

This is wrongly understood by some people, who think that al-dahr (translated as “time”) is one of the names of Allaah. But that is not the case. Rather al-dahr means [the vicissitudes of] time. The people of the Jaahiliyyah – who still have followers in this matter – used to inveigh against time, but none of them intended to inveigh against Allaah. How can they have intended to inveigh against Allaah when they used to say ‘Qabbah Allaah al-dahr (May Allaah curse time)’? Rather inveighing against time was forbidden, and time was ascribed to Allaah, because He, may He be exalted, is its Creator and controller.

For more detailed discussion of this matter, please see:

1. The answer to question no. [26977](#), in which it states that al-dahr is not one of the names of Allaah.
2. The answer to question no. [9571](#), in which it states the meaning of the saheeh hadeeth, “Do not inveigh against time, for Allaah is time.”

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah (may Allaah have mercy on him) was asked about the words of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), “Do not inveigh against time, for Allaah is time.” Does this support what the Ittihaadis [pantheists] say? Please explain that to us.

He replied:

Praise be to Allaah. The hadeeth “Do not inveigh against time, for Allaah is time” was narrated in other wordings, such as “Allaah says: ‘The son of Adam inveighs against Me, he inveighs against [the vicissitudes of] Time (al-Dahr), and I am Time, in My hand are all affairs, I alternate the night and the day’” and “Do not inveigh against time (al-dahr), for Allaah is time, He alternates the night and day” and “The son of Adam says, ‘Woe to time,’ but I am time.”

The words “in My hand are all affairs, I alternate the night and the day” indicate that the meaning is not “I am time [zamaan]”, because Allaah states that He alternates night and day, and time [zamaan] is night and day. Thus this hadeeth indicates that He alternates and controls time, as is indicated in the verse in which He says (interpretation of the meaning):

“See you not that Allaah drives the clouds gently, then joins them together, then makes them into a heap of layers, and you see the rain comes forth from between them; and He sends down from the sky hail (like) mountains, (or there are in the heaven mountains of hail from where He sends down hail), and strikes therewith whom He wills, and averts it from whom He wills. The vivid flash of its (clouds) lightning nearly blinds the sight”

[*al-Noor 24:43*].

Allaah states that He creates the rain and sends it down to the earth; it is the cause of life on earth because He has created from water every living thing. Then He says “*Allaah causes the night and the day to succeed each other*” [v. 44]. So He alternates the night and day, and causes the state of the earth to change by sending down rain, which is the cause of the creation of plants, animals and minerals. This is what causes people’s situations to change, which leads to some people being raised in status whilst others are lowered.

Allaah tells us in more than one place that He has created time, as He says (interpretation of the meaning):

“and originated the darkness and the light”

[*al-An’aam 6:1*]

“And He it is Who has created the night and the day, and the sun and the moon, each in an orbit floating”

[*al-Anbiya’ 21:33*]

“And He it is Who has put the night and the day in succession, for such who desires to remember or desires to show his gratitude”

[al-Furqaan 25:62]

“Verily, in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and in the alternation of night and day, there are indeed signs for men of understanding”

[Aal ‘Imraan 3:190]

And there are other texts which state that He is the Creator of time.

There is no confusion in this hadeeth, even if He did not state that He alternates the night and the day, so how about when it says in the same hadeeth that in His hand are all affairs, He alternates the night and the day?

The Muslims are unanimously agreed on something that is based on common sense and rational thinking: that Allaah is not al-dahr in the sense of al-zamaan.

Majmoo’ al-Fataawa (2/491-494).

Abu ‘Ubayd al-Qaasim ibn Salaam al-Harawi (may Allaah have mercy on him) said:

The phrase “Allaah is time (al-dahr)” – no Muslim should be confused about its meaning, because those who deny the attributes of Allaah use this hadeeth against the Muslims. I have seen one of those who are accused of heresy and who do not believe in the hereafter quoting this hadeeth and saying: Do you not see that he says ‘Allaah is time’? I say: Is there anyone who would inveigh against Allaah in any era? Rather its meaning in my opinion – and Allaah knows best – is that the Arabs (before Islam) used to blame time and inveigh against it when calamity such as death, old age, loss of wealth or other things befell them, so they regarded time as that which did that, so they inveighed against it because of that, and mentioned it in their poetry.

Ghareeb al-hadeeth (2/145).

Secondly:

When it becomes clear to you that al-dahr is not one of the names of Allaah, you will understand that there is nothing confusing about the phrase mentioned in the question, which is “Let us put our hand in the hand of time.” Because it does not imply any meaning that is contrary to sharee’ah, rather it is just a rhetorical style.

It may be criticized from another point of view, however. We have seen some people who use this phrase with the word “zamaan” and unfortunately many of them use expressions that inveigh against time, and they add more ideas to that, such as the notion that time is an oppressor, and some of them apply this wording to Allaah, may He be exalted, and some of them mean thereby al-qadar (divine decree). So the ways in which people use this phrase vary, but we have not seen this phrase in the words of scholars and imams. The ruling thereon depends on how it is used in the sentence and what the speaker believes with regard to it.

The meaning of the words mentioned in the question may be that a person is going through life with changes in reality and time, and he is not going against it. This understanding includes both that which is true and that which is false. We cannot judge the sentence fully unless we know its context and the intention of the speaker.

And Allaah knows best.

Consensus that the Earth is round

Is there consensus that the Earth is round? If there is, then what is the evidence from the Qur'an or Sunnah that the Earth is round or egg shaped?

Praise be to Allah.

More than one of the scholars have narrated that there is consensus that the Earth is round. For example:

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) narrated that from Abu'l-Husayn ibn al-Munaadi (may Allah have mercy on him), when he said:

Imam Abu'l-Husayn Ahmad ibn Ja'far ibn al-Munaadi narrated from the prominent scholars who are well known for knowledge of reports and major works in religious sciences, from the second level of Ahmad's companions, that there was no difference of opinion among the scholars that the sky is like a ball.

He said: Similarly they were unanimously agreed that the Earth, with all that is contains of land and sea is like a ball. He said: That is indicated by the fact that the sun, moon and stars do not rise and set over those who are in different parts of the earth at the same time; rather that occurs in the east before it occurs in the west.

End quote from *Majmoo' al-Fataawa* (25/195)

He (may Allah have mercy on him) was asked about two men who disputed about the nature of heaven and earth: were they both round bodies? One of them said that they were, but the other denied that and said there is no basis for that. What is the correct view?

He replied:

The heavens are round, according to the Muslim scholars. More than one of the scholars and Muslim leaders narrated that the Muslims are unanimously agreed on that, such as Abu'l-Husayn Ahmad ibn Ja'far ibn al-Munaadi, one of the leading figures among the second level of the companions of Imam Ahmad, who wrote approximately four hundred books. Consensus on this point was also narrated by Imam Abu Muhammad ibn Hazm and Abu'l-Faraj ibn al-Jawzi. The scholars narrated that with well-known chains of narration (isnaads) from the Sahaabah and Taabi'een, and they quoted that from the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger. They discussed that in detail with orally-transmitted evidence. There is

also mathematical evidence to that effect, and I do not know of anyone among the well-known Muslim scholars who denied that, apart from a few of those who engaged in arguments who, when they debated with the astrologers denied it for the sake of argument and said: It may be square or hexagonal and so on. They did not deny that it could be round, but they said that the opposite of that was possible. I do not know of anyone who said that it is not round – with any certainty – apart from some ignorant people to whom no one pays any attention.

End quote from *Majmoo‘ al-Fataawa* (6/586)

Abu Muhammad ibn Hazm (may Allah have mercy on him) said: Evidence for the earth being round:

Abu Muhammad said: We are going to discuss some of the arguments against the idea that the earth is round. They said: There is sound evidence that the earth is round, but the common folk say otherwise. Our response – and Allah is the source of strength – is that none of the leading Muslim scholars who deserve to be called imams or leaders in knowledge (may Allah be pleased with them) denied that the earth is round, and there is no narration from them to deny that. Rather the evidence in the Qur’an and Sunnah stated that it is round. ... and he quoted evidence to that effect.

End quote from *al-Fasl fi’l-Milal wa’l-Ahwa’ wa’l-Nihal* (2/78)

The evidence that the earth is round includes the following:

Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

“He created the heavens and earth for a true purpose; He wraps the night around the day and the day around the night”

[*az-Zumar* 39:5].

Ibn Hazm and others quoted this verse as evidence.

Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymeen (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

The earth is round, based on the evidence of the Qur’an, reality, and scientific views.

The evidence of the Qur’an is the verse in which Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

“He created the heavens and earth for a true purpose; He wraps the night around [yukanwir] the day and the day around the night”

[az-Zumar 39:5].

The word *yukanwir* (translated here as “wraps around” means to make something round, like a turban. It is well-known that night and day follow one another on earth, which implies that the Earth is round, because if you wrap one thing around another thing, and the thing that it is wrapped around is the Earth, then Earth must be round.

With regard to real-life evidence, this has been proven. If a man were to fly from Jeddah, for example, heading west, he would come back to Jeddah from the east, if he flew in a straight line. This is something concerning which no one differs.

With regard to the words of the scholars, they stated that if a man died in the west at sunset, and another died in the west at sunset, and there was some distance between them, the one who died in the west at sunset would inherit from the one who died in the east at sunset, if he was one of his heirs. This indicates that the earth is round, because if the earth were flat, sunset in all regions would occur at the same time. Once this is established, no one can deny it. This is not contradicted by the verses in which Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Do they not look at the camels, how they are created?

And at the heaven, how it is raised?

And at the mountains, how they are rooted and fixed firm?

And at the earth, how it is spread out?”

[al-Ghaashiyah 88:17-20]

Because the Earth is huge and its curvature cannot be seen from a short distance, it appears to be spread out and one cannot see anything that would make one fear living on it, but this does not contradict the fact that it is round, because it is very big. However they say that it is not evenly round; rather it is indented or pushed in at the north and south poles. Hence they say that it is egg-shaped.

End quote from *Fataawa Noor ‘ala ad-Darb*

Thus it is known that the Earth is round, and that is not contradicted by the fact that it is like an egg. Rather the false view is that which claims that it is flat, as the Church used to believe and for that reason used to curse and burn those scientists who said that it was round.

See: *al-'Almaaniyyah: Nash'atuba wa Tatannuruha* (1/130)

And Allah knows best.

Allaah created the universe in six days

Is it true that Allah created the universe in 6 days?

Praise be to Allaah.

Yes, Allaah created the heavens and the earth and everything in between in six days, as He says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And indeed We created the heavens and the earth and all between them in six Days and nothing of fatigue touched Us”[Qaaf 50:38]

This indicates that what the Jews, upon whom be the curses of Allaah, say is false, as they said that He got tired when He created the heavens and the earth in six days, so He rested on the Sabbath. Exalted be Allaah far above what they say.

More details are narrated in the Qur’aan. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Say (O Muhammad): ‘Do you verily disbelieve in Him Who created the earth in two Days? And you set up rivals (in worship) with Him? That is the Lord of the ‘Aalameen (mankind, jinn and all that exists).

He placed therein (i.e. the earth) firm mountains from above it, and He blessed it, and measured therein its sustenance (for its dwellers) in four Days equal (i.e. all these four ‘days’ were equal in the length of time) for all those who ask (about its creation).

Then He rose over (Istawa) towards the heaven when it was smoke, and said to it and to the earth: ‘Come both of you willingly or unwillingly.’ They both said: ‘We come willingly.’

Then He completed and finished from their creation (as) seven heavens in two Days and He made in each heaven its affair. And We adorned the nearest (lowest) heaven with lamps (stars) to be an adornment as well as to guard (from the devils by using them as missiles against the devils). Such is the Decree of Him, the All-Mighty, the All-Knower”[Fussilat 41:9-12]

And Allaah knows best.

How can we define the qiblah for Muslim students at the University of California?

i am the president of muslim student association in california state university at long beach, and by allah help we were able to have a place to pray in the campus, but the problem is that we i asked about the direction of ALQIBLA i have found two different answers on is southeast {which i agree on} the other is north east. i now on big problem because i do not know where to place alqibla in the place we got. i know it does not make any sense but i really do not know what to do.

Praise be to Allaah.

Firstly:

Wa ‘alaykum al-salaam wa rahmat-Allaahi wa barakaatuhu (and upon you be peace and the mercy and blessings of Allaah). We congratulate you and your companions for your efforts in getting a place to pray. We ask Allaah to fill it with you and with people who will stand and bow and prostrate there.

Secondly:

One of the essential parts (pillars) of the prayer is facing the qiblah; this is a must. Whoever knows the direction of the qiblah and can face it, but does not do so, his prayer is invalid and he is a sinner, because Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“so turn your face in the direction of Al-Masjid Al-Haram (at Makkah). And wheresoever you people are, turn your faces (in prayer) in that direction” [al-Baqarah 2:144].

Unless one has a valid excuse, this is the requirement in fard (obligatory) prayers. With regard to naafil (supererogatory) prayers, it is permissible to face any direction one wishes if one is riding whilst travelling. But if one is able to dismount, then it is not permissible for one who is praying a naafil prayer to face any direction other than the qiblah, when one does not have the excuse of riding whilst travelling.

Thirdly:

Whoever is near the Ka’bah has to face the Ka’bah itself, because Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“so turn your face in the direction of Al-Masjid Al-Haraam” [al-Baqarah 2:144].

Hence the rows of worshippers around the Ka’bah are circular; the further away they are, the wider the circle is, and the closer they are, the smaller the circle is. Whoever is inside al-Masjid al-Haraam has to face the Ka’bah itself. Whoever is in Makkah has to face al-Masjid al-Haraam; whoever is outside Makkah has to face Makkah. Facing in that direction is sufficient, because of the hadeeth, “Whatever is between the east and the west is the qiblah.” (Narrated by al-Tirmidhi, 342; Ibn Maajah, 1011).

This reference to the east and the west applies specifically to the people of Madeenah and others for whom the direction of the Qiblah is the same, because the Messenger [an error occurred while processing this directive] (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said this to the people of Madeenah.

Fourthly:

After looking at the map – which is what you should do – if you look at the map and draw a line between California and Makkah and look at the direction of this line, this will tell you what the direction of the qiblah is.

(This is according to a fatwa given to us by our shaykh, Shaykh Muhammad ibn Saalih al-‘Uthaymeen. The worshipper does not have to pay attention to the curvature of the earth’s surface when determining the qiblah; he can work out the direction of Makkah by a straight line).

When we look at the map, we find that the direction of the qiblah (from California) is towards the east, with a very slight deviation towards the south which is hardly worth mentioning.

So your qiblah lies between the north and the south, so if you face east, somewhere between the north and south, that will be OK. There is no need to cause big problems and fitnah among the Muslims concerning this issue which Islam has made easy, when it says that the qiblah is between the east and the west, and the scholars have stated that a slight deviation from the direction of Makkah does not matter. So use whatever means are available to determine the direction of the qiblah.

The Standing Committee was asked about using astronomical instruments to determine the direction of the Ka’bah, and they replied as follows:

The Muslim scholars and those who were experienced in navigation could find the direction of the Ka'bah at night by referring to the Pole Star and other stars, and the moon as it rose and set, and during the day by referring to the sun as it rose and set, and by reference to other natural phenomena, before there were any Japanese or European navigational devices and the like. So knowledge of the qiblah is not to be determined solely by use of these tools. But if it is confirmed by trustworthy Muslim experts in this field that a specific device can show the direction of the qiblah precisely or approximately, then there is no shar'i reason why we should not use it; indeed, it may be obligatory to act in accordance with it if a person who wants to pray cannot find any other evidence of the qiblah.

May Allaah help us and you to do all that is good. May Allaah bless our Prophet Muhammad.

Ruling on going to astrologers and believing them

Is it permissible to go to astrologers and to believe what they say, or not? Al-Nasaa'i narrated that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "The prayer of the one who goes to them and believes them will not be accepted." Is this correct? Please explain to us what was narrated from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) and what the scholars have said. Praise be to Allaah.

There are many ahaadeeth which state that this is haraam, such as the hadeeth narrated from Safiyah bint Abi 'Ubayd from one of the wives of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), who narrated that he said: "Whoever goes to a soothsayer and asks him about something and believes him, his prayer will not be accepted for forty days." (Narrated by Muslim in his *Saheeh*).

Qusaybah ibn al-Mukhaariq said: "I heard the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) say: '*Al-'ayaafah, al-tiyarah and al-turuq* [kinds of augury] are all part of *al-jabt* [witchcraft or idolatry].'" This was narrated by Abu Dawood with a *saheeh isnaad*. Abu Dawood said: *Al-'ayaafah, al-khatt and al-turuq* are all kinds of augury, whereby a bird is released and is watched to see whether it flies to the right or to the left. If it flies to the right it is taken as a good omen and if it flies to the left it is taken as a bad omen. Al-Jawhari said: *al-jabt* is a word which may be applied to idols, soothsayers, magicians, astrologers etc.

It was narrated that Ibn 'Abbaas (may Allaah be pleased with him) said: the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "Whoever seeks knowledge from the stars is seeking one of the branches of witchcraft..." Narrated by Abu Dawood with a *saheeh isnaad*.

It was narrated that Mu'aawiyah ibn al-Hakam said: "I said, 'O Messenger of Allaah, I am still close to the time of Jaahiliyyah [i.e., I am new in Islam]. Allaah has brought Islam to us, but there are among us men who go to soothsayers (fortune tellers).' He said, 'Do not go to them.' I said, 'And there are men among us who practise augury [watch birds for omens].' He said, 'That is something which they make up. Do not believe them.'" (Narrated by Muslim).

It was narrated from Abu Mas'ood al-Badri that the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) forbade the price of a dog, the fee of a prostitute and the payment of a soothsayer. (Narrated by al-Bukhaari and Muslim).

It was reported that 'Aa'ishah (may Allaah be pleased with her) said: "Some people asked the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) about soothsayers. He said, 'They are nothing.' They said, 'O Messenger of Allaah, sometimes they say something and it comes true.' The Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: 'That is a word of truth that the jinn snatches and whispers into the ear of his familiar, but they mix a hundred lies with it.'" (Narrated by al-Bukhaari and Muslim).

It was narrated from Abu Hurayrah (may Allaah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "Whoever comes to a soothsayer and believes what he says, or has intercourse with a woman in her back passage, has nothing to do with that which has been revealed to Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him)." (Narrated by Abu Dawood).

... The scholars have stated that it is haraam to deal with such matters or to go to find out about them or to believe in them. It is haraam to pay them money, and anyone who is suffering from any of these things must hasten to repent from it. And Allaah knows best.

Seeing Laylat al-Qadr

Can Laylat al-Qadr be seen, i.e. can it be seen with the human eye? Some people say that if a person can see Laylat al-Qadr he sees a light in the sky and so on. How did the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) and the Sahaabah (may Allaah be pleased with them all) see it? How can a person know that he has seen Laylat al-Qadr? Will a person still gain its reward even if he could not see that night? Please explain that to us, and mention the evidence for it.

Praise be to Allaah.

Laylat al-Qadr may be seen with the eye, for the one whom Allaah helps to see it. That is by seeing its signs. The Sahaabah (may Allaah be pleased with them) used to recognize it by its signs. But not seeing them does not mean that one will not gain its reward, if one spends that night in prayer out of faith and the hope of reward. The Muslim should strive to seek it in the last ten nights of Ramadaan, as enjoined by the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), hoping to earn reward. If it so happens that a person spends this night in prayer out of faith and seeking reward, then he will gain its reward, even if he does not know that that was Laylat al-Qadr. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "Whoever spends the night of Laylat al-Qadr in prayer out of faith and seeking reward, all his previous sins will be forgiven." According to another report: "Whoever spends that night in prayer, seeking Laylat al-Qadr, then he catches it, his previous and future sins will be forgiven."

And a sound report from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) indicates that the sign of Laylat al-Qadr is that the sun rises on the following morning with no visible rays. Ubayy ibn Ka'b used to swear that it was the night of the twenty-seventh, citing this sign as evidence. The more correct view is that it moves through all the last ten nights, but it is most likely to be one of the odd-numbered nights, and the night of the twenty-seventh is the most likely among the odd-numbered nights. Whoever strives in worship during all of the last ten nights, praying, reading Qur'aan, making du'aa' and other kinds of good deeds will undoubtedly catch up with Laylat al-Qadr and attain what Allaah has promised to those who do that out of faith and seeking reward.

And Allaah is the Source of strength, May Allaah bless our Prophet Muhammad and his family and companions.

What is meant by the black and white threads in the verse on fasting

Is regarding the time of suhoor. In the Quran, Allah S.W.T says: 2:187:and eat and drink until the whit thread becomes clear to you from the black thread of the dawn.... Doesn't this mean we can eat until the sun starts to rise? Then why do we stop at adhaan of fajr, which is more than an hour before sunrise.

Praise be to Allaah.

What is meant by the black thread in the verse is the night, and the white thread is the dawn, not the rising of the sun.

Dawn is called the white thread because the first thing that is seen of the dawn is a light in the sky that looks like a thread along the horizon, stretching from right to left, from north to south. Then it continues to increase until it spreads through the whole sky. See *Fath al-Baari*, commentary on hadeeth no. 1917.

Al-Bukhaari (1916) and Muslim (1090) narrated that ‘Adiyy ibn Haatim (may Allaah be pleased with him) said: “When the words ‘*until the white thread (light) of dawn appears to you distinct from the black thread (darkness of night)*’ [*al-Baqarah 2:187 – interpretation of the meaning*] were revealed, I took a black rope and a white rope and put them beneath my pillow, and I started to look at them during the night, but I could not see any distinction between them. The next morning I went to the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) and told him about that. He said, ‘Rather that is the blackness of the night and the whiteness of the day.’”

Al-Nawawi (may Allaah be pleased with him) said:

Abu ‘Ubayd said: The white thread is the true dawn and the black thread is the night.

And Allaah knows best.

Difference in the timing of Fajr and Maghrib prayers in Bahrain and Dammam

This question is regarding Ramadaan in Bahrain. I live in Dammam, and it is known that the prayer times in both Dammam and Bahrain are the same as they are very close to each other. This year I heard that Fajr time in Bahrain is after its time in Dammam, and Maghrib time in Bahrain is before its time in Dammam. I think, and Allah knows best, that there is a mistake in the calendar. If this mistake in Bahrain, does it mean that they have Suhoor after Fajr time, and break their fast before sunset?.

Praise be to Allaah.

The time for Fajr prayer begins with the second dawn, which is the white line that appears across the horizon right and left. This is the true dawn. As for the false dawn, it is the vertical white lines in the sky which appear from top to bottom, like sticks. This happens approximately twenty minutes before the true dawn, and may be more or less depending on the season.

As for the time of Maghrib, it begins when the sun sets. There is nothing wrong with following timetables, unless they are proven to be mistaken.

Referring to the timetable of Umm al-Qura, it shows that the time for Fajr on 5 Ramadaan 1428 AH/16 September 2007 CE in Manama is 4:01 a.m., and the time for Maghrib is 5:42 p.m.

The time for Fajr in Dammam is 4:03 a.m. and the time for Maghrib is 5:44 p.m.

It is the same throughout the month; the time for Fajr and Maghrib in Bahrain is a few minutes ahead of the times in Dammam.

Perhaps you may consult the body responsible for timetables in Bahrain, to find a reliable timetable and to find out whether what you have heard about the time of Fajr being late this year is true.

And Allaah knows best.